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I N S I D E

Local

WEATHER FORECAST

PICTURE TIME: 2:25 A.M., DECEMBER 17, 2003
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A monsoon trough extends from 6N130E through a tropical disturbance near 8N145E and finally to near 5N160E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with the disturbance are found in the Mariana islands as well as between Yap and Chuuk or between 4N and 16N from 139E to 153E. Just east of the monsoon trough, a surface trough of low pressure continues to near the equator at 168E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are developing north and east of the trough or within 100 miles either side of a line from 9N160E to the equator at 173E, including Kosrae. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms across portions of the Marshall islands, between 4N and 16N from 170E to 180.


SAIPAN AND TINIAN

Cloudy and breezy with scattered showers, some locally heavy, and a slight chance of thunderstorms.

Winds: East at 20-25 mph. Gusting in 35 mph in showers.

Temperature: Lows near 78. Highs near 86.


GUAM AND ROTA

Cloudy and breezy with scattered showers, some locally heavy, and a slight chance of thunderstorms.

Winds: East at 20-25 mph. Gusting in 35 mph in showers.

Temperature: Lows near 78. Highs near 86.


PALAU

Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.


POHNPEI

Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: East at 10 kt.


YAP AND ULITHI

Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.


KOSRAE

Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: Southeast at 10 kt.


CHUUK

Mostly cloudy with scattered showers with a slight chance of thunderstorms.

Winds: Northeast at 10-15 kt.


MAJURO

Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.

Winds: East at 10-15 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
Auckland	Cloudy	61F (16C)	49F (9C)
Beijing	Sunny	44F (7C)	26F (-3C)
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	86F (30C)	72F (22C)
London, England	Cloudy	56F (13C)	45F (7C)
Los Angeles	Cloudy	69F (21C)	51F (11C)
Manila	Cloudy	88F (31C)	71F (22C)
Melbourne	Sunny	73F (23C)	54F (12C)
Miami	Partly Cloudy	84F (29C)	75F (24C)
New York, NY	Cloudy	52F (11C)	48F (9C)
Osaka	Rain	54F (12C)	46F (8C)
Paris	Cloudy	53F (12C)	41F (5C)
Pusan	Rain	58F (14C)	43F (6C)
Rome	Partly Cloudy	55F (13C)	39F (4C)
Salem, Oregon	Rain	54F (12C)	38F (3C)
San Francisco	Sunny	64F (18C)	47F (5C)
Seoul	Rain	52F (11C)	45F (7C)
Tokyo	Rain	55F (13C)	49F (9C)
Washington, DC	Cloudy	60F (16C)	48F (9C)

OPA highlights Ethics Act in SCC meeting

As part of efforts to prevent problems before they arise, Public Auditor Michael S. Sablan spoke before the Saipan Chamber of Commerce yesterday about the CNMI Ethics Act and how it relates to the private sector when interacting with government employees and officials.

This forms part of a wider effort on the part of the Office of the Public Auditor in reaching out to government workers and the private sector on what constitutes a violation of the Act and how to avoid them.

"Ethics is basically knowing what's right and wrong and deciding to do what's correct," he said.

According to Sablan, the CNMI Ethics Act is among the strictest in the entire country, so his presentation focused on the special restrictions on disallowed gifts from businesses, illegal political activities in government offices, and conflicts of interest between public responsibilities and private business interests.

"We would rather reach out and inform them [government employees] before employees get in trouble," he said.

Sablan told Chamber members that the Act also applied to business people when they interact with government workers, so a large part of his presentation dealt with acceptable and unacceptable gifts for government workers.

"Where public officials are prohibited from accepting certain gifts, private businesses are also prohibited from offering certain gifts," he stressed.

Chamber president Alex Sablan underscored the value of the presentation, saying, "We felt this was an important presentation to start the beginning of the year as it would help level the playing field."

The issue of gifts is a particularly thorny one, said Sablan, because of the local culture where it is impolite to decline gifts. "We get a lot of calls about gifts," he added.

Included among unacceptable gifts are:

- Cash gifts given anonymously;
- Where official acts may be influenced;
- Gifts from someone being regulated;
- Gifts from someone doing business with the government, particularly entities that earn \$5,000 or more a year.

Gifts that are considered acceptable, he said, are:

- Non-cash with a value of less than \$50;
- Non-cash, provided that the gifts are occasional;
- Not anonymous;
- Not from someone being regulated or doing business with the government.

The OPA has conducted about 101 presentations so far to some

3,500 government employees in the last two years.

Sablan expressed hope that expanding greater awareness of the CNMI Ethics Act to the private sector will promote greater trust and confidence in public service and accountability.

He urged Chamber members to visit the OPA's website—www.opa.cnmi.com—for more information.

Wednesday's meeting was

the Chamber's first during of the year. It was held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

Besides Sablan's presentation, the meeting also featured the introduction of the newest members to the Chamber. These are the Marianas Public Lands Authority and Infosite Server. Both of the members were provided their membership portfolio, which includes the bylaws, code of ethics, and the membership

directory of the Chamber.

The SCC is comprised of about 140 members and seven committees. Each committee chairperson will outline their goals and objectives for the year and will invite Chamber members to be a part of the committee. This year's committee chairpersons are Mike Schadeck for the Armed Forces committee; Jeff Boyer, who will co-chair the Environmental committee; Scott Norman, who will



Sablan

once again chair the Education committee; Jay Jones and Juan Guerrero, who will spearhead the Government Relation and Economic Development committee; Charles Cepeda, who will direct the Events committee, while Alex Sablan will take the lead for the newly established public/private efficiency committee.

The Chamber's meeting is held the first Wednesday of every month.

\$40M bond underwriter to visit Saipan

The underwriter for the \$40-million bond issue meant to address longstanding land compensation claims is expected to pay the CNMI a visit next week, the Commonwealth Development Authority told legislators this week.

Sean Keatts, vice president of the Lehman Bros. is scheduled to be on Saipan from Feb. 12-13 for a courtesy call.

CDA Executive Director MaryLou S. Ada informed Legislature members that Keatts wishes to convey his appreciation for the CNMI officials' efforts in issuing the \$40 million bond for land compensation claims.

Senate President Joaquin G. Adriano has advised members of the upper house to attend a meeting with CDA officials and Keatts next Thursday, Feb. 12 starting 3pm at the Senate Chamber.

CDA successfully issued the \$40 million General Obligation bonds last December, authorized by Public Law 13-17, as amended.

According to the development authority, the \$40-million general obligation bonds, Series 2003A received a rating of Ba3 from Moody's Investors Services and B+ from Standard & Poors on Nov. 26, 2003.

Maturing on October 1, 2033 with an interest rate of 6.750

percent, the bonds were sold to Lehman Bros.—the underwriters on December 4, 2003.

Proceeds of the \$40-million general obligation bond issue will be used to pay for certain parcels and other private real property taken by the government for public roads, highways, as well as to fund the construction of the Adult Correctional Facility as provided in the Bond Act.

CDA had announced that the payout to landowners is underway, to be released possibly this week or next week.

Board chairman Sixto Igisomar said that he and the CDA executive director had signed

the request for the first drawdown of the bond money at Bank of Guam last Thursday.

Although Igisomar declined to reveal the initial withdrawal, sources said that it amounts to some \$5 million.

Igisomar said the initial release should have actually taken place last week but CDA officials were on an urgent trip to Palau.

The MPLA board earlier approved 75 folders for immediate land compensation after the signing and release of the \$40-million bond.

Of the total amount, only about \$27 million will be used for land compensation since \$11 million has been allotted for

a pending prison project. The bond underwriter also deducted \$1.5 million for cost of the bond issuance.

The government is given 30 years to pay off the loan at an annual interest of 6.75 percent.

The first batch of claimants are landowners whose lands were acquired by the CNMI government for rights-of-way. The next would be those whose lands were acquired for ponding basins. Lastly, the government will settle with landowners of wetlands and other claims. The MPLA has listed some 120 eligible land claimants in the CNMI.

(Marian A. Maraya)

cars unlimited

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Happy Birthday, DHS

This week, the Department of Homeland Security celebrates its first anniversary as an institution. To mark the occasion, multiple reports on its progress are due. With its staff crowded into temporary office space or scattered across Washington, with a high percentage—the numbers are disputed—of its senior positions unfilled, with quarrels still erupting periodically about its employees' union rights and pay scales, critics are saying that the department is still a work in progress. It's also true that an enormous amount has been achieved in the past year, as DHS officials are telling everyone this week: a new airport security system, new border operations, new port security, new fences in Washington. Melding these two drastically different pictures is difficult. What is missing, still, is a better way for outsiders and insiders to measure the department's development.

It is always difficult to monitor the progress of a large government department—and this one has 180,000 employees. But the DHS is a special case. For one thing, more than 80 congressional committees and subcommittees have jurisdiction over some part of the department, making for much repetitive testimony and muddled oversight. The very newness of the idea of "homeland security" is a larger problem. How much should be spent on first responders, as opposed to biodefense research? Which is more important: protecting chemical plants or protecting cyberspace?

Some of these points are raised by Democratic members of the House Select Committee on Homeland Security, in a report they issued last week. They point out that there is still no "comprehensive threat and vulnerability assessment to set priorities and guide strategy." Nor has the department produced a list of "essential capabilities that all communities should have," based, realistically, on what threats they might face, as opposed to how much money members of Congress might want for their districts. Although DHS spokesmen say they have asked states to develop security plans, there is no standard by which to judge those plans. The department's inspector general has written that it needs to develop "meaningful performance measures" to help it make judgments about where to spend money.

Perhaps unintentionally, the Democrats' report also makes apparent what the result will be if clear targets are not set. In almost every area of DHS activity—border security, port security, intelligence, infrastructure protection—the authors, and the myriad experts they quote, find the department understaffed and underfunded, lacking everything from border guards to computer experts to a container inspectorate that, in the words of one expert, ought to be the size of "a diplomatic service." Maybe so—but it would also be very expensive to fill all of those jobs, and it isn't clear how much security the country would really get in return for the extra money.

To its credit, the department has published its own list of "priorities" for year two. Some, such as better communications systems, are clearly critical. Missing, however, is a sense of which threats the department considers most urgent. Truck bombs? Hijackings? Nuclear weapons? Officials in the department, higher-ranking members of the administration and members of Congress should dedicate the department's second year to refining their definition of "threat," as well as their definition of "protection," so that future progress assessments become easier to make.

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Keep your tired, poor stereotypes

By STANLEY KARNOW
Special to the Los Angeles Times

Chauvinists worried that immigration threatens to blemish the nation's "purity" might look at the Washington suburb where I live. It was a drowsy, lily-white stretch of farms, stables and split-level houses when we moved there 30 years ago. Since then, it has burgeoned into a multicultural, multicolored, multilingual enclave—dramatic evidence that the United States, despite its manifold defects, is a beacon for throngs from everywhere.

In contrast to the wretched, tempest-tossed, huddled masses sketched by Emma Lazarus in her celebrated poem, many newcomers are educated, skilled, wealthy and fluent in English. They disembark attuned to the best and the worst of the United States from their exposure to its movies, radio programs and television shows, or from the Internet. Their teenagers sport baseball caps and Levi's, ride skateboards and are acquainted with Coke, Big Macs, Mickey Mouse, Madonna and Elvis. Others who come fit Lazarus' description. But rich or poor, they come eager to work hard for a better life.

My neighbors include a German architect and his Iranian wife, a Palestinian contractor, a Korean scientist and a car salesman from Madagascar. An Indian physician converted her home into a miniature Taj Mahal, replete with bronze elephants on the lawn.

The local clinic employs an acupuncturist versed in the subtleties of yang and yin. Filipinos nurse the elderly. The mechanic at the garage is Senegalese, the attendants Mongolian and Pakistani. My barber is a French-Jewish woman who traces her lineage back to Tunisia. The shop is owned by a Korean. We rely for repairs on a group of Jamaican carpenters, electricians, painters and plumbers. Our part-time gardener is a Salvadoran. Initially he came into the area by bus, but now he has a truck.

The supermarket is staffed by Filipinos, Cameroons, Haitians, Latinos, Indians, Thais and a Tibetan. It's stocked with borscht, matzo, couscous, mango chutney, shitake mushrooms, lemon grass, taro and varied herbs. There are dozens of kinds of rices and noodles.

The community center offers classes in tai chi chuan, karate and yoga. Books, periodicals and videos, tapes and DVDs in Chinese, Japanese, Hindi, Italian, Korean, Russian, Tagalog and Vietnamese

are available at the public library. At the elementary school, a teacher from Beijing is "immersing" kindergartners in the rudiments of Mandarin. One morning, when I casually dropped in on them, they were perched on the stools and gleefully chanting ditties in rote, reminding me of toddlers in Hong Kong, my base as a correspondent during the 1960s.

This spectacular demographic transformation owes its genesis to President Johnson. In 1965, consistent with his sweeping liberal agenda, he persuaded Congress to legislate a progressive immigration law. Among other things, it repealed the patently racist statute promoted in 1924 by jingoists and super-patriots that cut legal immigration by half as a device to curb the admission of "undesirables" from Eastern and Southern Europe. Today, 30 million Americans are foreign-born.

The "melting pot" concept, glorified as the paradigm, turned out to be an illusion, primarily because people sought to preserve their distinct identities. We are closer to the notion of "cultural pluralism" broached in 1925 by the Jewish philosopher Horace Kallen. Dismayed by the thought of dissolving his pedigree in an Anglo-centric caldron, he suggested a "loose federation of nationalities ... cooperating voluntarily through a multiplicity of autonomous institutions." Die-hard conformists vehemently decried his proposal as a gambit for championing "hyphenated" Americanism. But he was remarkably prescient.

The syrupy Norman Rockwell illustration of the country as an exclusive WASP domain has faded into oblivion as we evolve into a land of diverse minorities. The danger, however, is that unum may be eclipsed by pluribus, and we become a fragmented society. The phenomenon is apparent on college campuses, where student activists, prodded by their politically correct professors, stridently clamor for segregated dining halls, fraternities, lounges and curriculums. Immigrants are impervious to this trend.

Recently, while paying a bill at the gas station, I noticed that the black cashier was perusing a newspaper in a language unfamiliar to me. "I'm Ethiopian," he explained, then asked me: "Are you Jewish?" Amazed, I replied, "Yes." "So am I," he replied, adding "shalom" as he handed me my change.

Karnow was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in history in 1990; his most recent book is "Paris in the Fifties."

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is the owner of Positively Outrageous Results. They have consulted with over 400 businesses in 40 different industries. For better business results go to BizResults.biz to read previous articles.



Due Diligence

You have a key position in your firm that you need to fill for several weeks and, after interviewing candidates, you have narrowed your choice down to three individuals. Each one seems equally qualified, but one person is very articulate and has some outstanding responses to the questions you've prepared. After some deliberation, you and your team choose the articulate candidate.

Did you make the right choice? Time is the great revelator that will determine the answer to that question; however, there are some things you can do to minimize your risk before making a decision. Risk is inherent in any choice, whether it be hiring someone, making a major purchase, or acquiring a business or property. In each of the situations, it is essential for you to accomplish due diligence to ensure the information available to you is accurate and current.

Concerning the purchase of a business, due diligence is the process of investigating a business' claimed and actual operating and financial performance. The purpose is to verify all the material facts affecting the business for sale. When used to hire a key individual, due diligence requires you to collect all available information, thoroughly scrutinize it, check references, and verify all the facts in order to hire a candidate that will fit best and add the most value to the organization.

In other words, due diligence is the process you use to make sure that you understand everything you need to know about a person, business, or entity in order to make the best choice. As a business owner, you will be faced with serious decisions that can have a major impact on your wealth, health, and general well-being. Unless you enjoy gambling with your future, it is better to follow a more methodical approach to make better choices. Here are four primary components of the due diligence process: 1) Review; 2) interview; 3) confirm; and 4) analyze.

In the review phase of the process, you should gather and examine all pertinent documents related to the decision that needs to be made. For a business, you could examine all the physical assets, such as office and factory space, retail space, inventory, equipment, and other tangible assets listed on the balance sheet. When evaluating an individual, gather and review the resume, official transcripts, letters of reference, and other documents pertaining to the position.

During the interview phase, ensure you meet with people that are important to the operation of the business. Also, meet with the organization's vendors, key customers, competitors and anyone else that may have information that is of value to you about the business. For an individual, you will interview the candidate, check references, and meet with other people who know the candidate and can give a well-rounded view of the person.

The confirmation phase of the due diligence process requires that you obtain third-party verification of all written materials and oral statements that you have available. Verify bank balances and financing arrangements with bankers, conduct a physical audit of inventory and equipment, and verify contracts with vendors and customers. An interviewee's degree transcript should be verified with the educational institution, previous employers need to be contacted to verify the stated facts, and check credit references. The Internet is a useful resource to learn more about a candidate and confirm facts.

Finally, you will need to conduct an analysis of numerical data to paint a clear picture of how the business fits into a market niche. Have an accountant review the financial statements, determine financial ratios, and compare figures with industry averages to provide a clear picture of the intrinsic health of the business. For an individual, you should take all the information you have gathered and confirmed for each candidate and then compare them against a set of criteria that are weighted according to each criterion's level of importance.

Ultimately, what you are doing is making a decision to obtain future results, not past performance. Due diligence allows you to verify the facts of past performance in hopes that it is indicative of future performance.

If you follow these suggestions and base your decisions on well-grounded information that supports a set of criteria you have established, then you should be able to look back on your decision in a couple of years and honestly tell yourself that you made the right choice. The business you buy or the person you hire should be a moneymaker, not a moneytaker.

More options for 'boom boomers'

Q What may be the challenges to CNMI policymakers concerning the job opportunities for youths who were born during our economic boom and now about ready to enter the job market?

A Across the nation a major debate is underway on baby boomers who are nearing the retirement age. While the nation is concerned about the Social Security and medical issues of the baby boomers, we in the CNMI should be concerned about the jobs for youths. Our youths who are about to enter the job market were born during the CNMI's economic boom. These youths—the "boom boomers"—are the product of a very special period in our economic history and thus have very unique characteristics.

To better understand the expectations of jobs and lifestyles of these boom boomers we need to look at the conditions in which they were brought up. Most likely everyone of them were pampered by a housemaid. A few, if any, had the chance to do chores such as setting up the dining table, washing dishes, fixing their rooms to keep them orderly, and made responsible to do other tasks that are common practices for children in a typical American household. Probably only a very few may have been dismayed with the Christmas gifts they got from Santa Clause. An adequate pocket money may have never been a problem. Very likely they grew up riding in an SUV and may also have the luxury of driving an SUV before entering the job market.

To a boom boomer who grew up under such circumstances, having a boom box, owning a low-rider or a high-rider may be a thing

By MOHAMMAD ASHRAF, PH.D.

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of an ordinary. Who in the right frame of mind would expect a boom boomer to line up for a three-dollar-an-hour job to support an independent life? To them getting three dollars an hour pay may be hardly more than the free pocket money they have been so accustomed to in their upbringing. Now, one can imagine how aggressive these boomers will be to look for jobs at this wage level and if they did get one, how enthusiastic would they be in their job performance. For the policymakers, creation of jobs appropriate to the expectations of these boomers is a challenging task.

Increasing drug abuse, incidences of suicide, and other crimes attributed to youths may be taken as a sign of their frustration with the economic opportunities open to them. Something need to done fast and soon before it becomes a more severe social problem. Job opportunities need to be opened to channel the energies and talent of these boom boomers. All existing programs dealing with the youths need to be evaluated and fine-tuned to achieve the desired results. No wishy-washy approach will do to effectively meet this challenge.

Can anything real be heard above the clamor?

By G. JEFFERSON PRICE III

The Baltimore Sun

For America, a country of a quarter of a billion people of diverse origin, character and interests, there is a multitude of issues—ranging from war and peace, to the economy, the arts, sex, crime, education, religion, abortion. Any one of these and many others could dominate the national debate.

The Israeli, Avi Pazner, now a close associate of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, was right about security being the single issue that persistently dominates discussions in Israel. Whether Israel is trying to make peace or make war, security is the issue. And he would still be right about America.

Back then, I thought, Americans were lucky to be able to care passionately about so many issues. But back then, the Cold War notwithstanding, America was not at war. Now it is, for better or for worse, rightly or wrongly, in wise or unwise ways.

So now I'm not so sure about the intrusion of other "issues." The way in which we allow, even encourage, them to dominate the national discourse seems appalling. For these are not the life-or-death issues that should remain our focus.

This came to mind at the end of a week in which America seemed to be obsessed with Mel Gibson's snuff film about the crucifixion of Jesus, and with gay marriages, or weddings, or unions—whatever. It was the last week in a month that began, mind you, with a huge hullabaloo over the baring of Janet Jackson's breast at the conclusion of a pretty vile Super Bowl halftime show.

I did not see the breast moment, and I have not seen Gibson's film. This might place me outside the American mainstream. For the sake of full disclosure, I was not interested in Britney Spears' short-lived marriage in Las Vegas. I have barely followed that other obsession, the Martha Stewart case (poor Martha). The abiding media fixation with the Scott Peterson murder case baffles me. The Michael Jackson case makes me wonder what the rest of the world must think of us. I have never watched a "reality" show.

I do have an opinion about the Gibson film, even though I haven't seen it. Here's what I think: I think it's a movie and nothing more. The real cause of fascination is how Gibson, with the enthusiastic assistance of the national and international media, got one of the biggest publicity free rides I think I have ever witnessed. Every newspaper covered the film, its making and all of the discussion about what it all means with more ink than any story since Bill and Monica. Every cable and network television and radio medium has been full of palaver about the film. The pope was even dragged into the story.

The publicity reached a crushing mass last week to practically

everybody's distraction.

Except for the intrusion of the gay-marriage issue, that is.

Unlike the movie that people were obsessing about last week, this is reality, whether you're for it or against. It is reality for men and women who are homosexual and who are discriminated against because they are. Homosexuals who want to share their lives are discriminated against in ways that do not apply even to criminals.

I have friends and colleagues who are homosexuals. They tend to be honest, caring, interested and interesting men and women, and loving people. They include devout Christians—Catholics and Protestants—Jews and a Muslim.

Sure there are outrageous gays. Some gays are not gay at all; they are sullen and angry. Some straight people are outrageous, too. Some are not straight at all; they're crooked. And some, we know, are downright perverted. But they can get a marriage license without any trouble at all.

What harm is done to anyone by allowing homosexuals to unite legally so that their partnership can enjoy the same benefits that heterosexual Americans do? How does allowing people who care deeply and devotedly for each other to join in the institution of marriage threaten the institution itself? The first couple to marry in San Francisco had been together for 50 years. That's a lot longer than most Americans make it.

The attention the story received was not troubling. Unlike the others, this is not about entertainment or entertainers; it is about fairness and equality. And it worries people.

What bothered me was that the president of the United States, the leader of the most powerful, most democratic nation in the world, grabbed the issue to press for an amendment to the constitution in "defense of marriage" as a union only between a man and a woman.

Marriage does need its defenders. American marriages are endangered and breaking up all the time, and laws against homosexual marriages won't do a thing to help them.

But the president surely has greater dangers he ought to be concentrating on and doing whatever he can to make sure Americans stay focused on what's important and perilous.

So, could we be a little more Israeli about this?

There's a war on. America's security is threatened by al-Qaida, and Osama bin Laden and his henchmen are still out there. Meanwhile, people are still dying in Iraq and we need to know if going there was necessary and good. Our enemies are not distracted by movies or issues that question their manhood.

Think about that. Please.

Price is editor of The Sun's Perspective section.

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Korean print media to cover NMI in March

Korean newspaper representatives will be arriving on Saipan today and will be staying on-island until Sunday, March 7, to cover much of the island's tourist sites and making time for an 18-hole game of golf.

The reporters will also make a day trip to the island of Rota to preview the greenery of the island and its ecotourism offerings.

The media group consists of reporters from six Korean newspapers with an accumulated circulation of over 7 million copies distributed to readers in their 20's through 50's.

These publications include the Kookmin Ilbo, Seoul Daily, Hankook Ilbo, Sports

Daily, Hankook Economic Daily, and Kyunghyang Daily. Total ad value from this media familiarization is estimated at over \$15,000.

"Newspaper mediums are one of the many ways we can promote the CNMI's pristine and natural settings. The coverage by the six reporters will eventually bring forth a positive message of the CNMI and will increase awareness to the

more than seven million readers in Korea," said MVA managing director Jonas Ogren.

The Korea media familiarization tour is made possible by Saipan World Resort, Kingfisher Golf Links, Tasi Tours, Gagani Fruit Farm, and the Marianas Visitors Authority.

Expert holds workshop on pesticide use

An agricultural expert from the University of Guam is conducting a workshop about the proper use of commercial pesticide on Saipan.

Roland Quitugua of the UoG's College of Agriculture has been conducting the five-day workshop since Monday at the Hyatt Regency Saipan. The workshop will conclude tomorrow.

Isidoro Cabrera, agricultural consultant to the Northern Marianas College's Cooperative Research, Education and Extension

Service, said at least 25 participants representing golf facilities, hotels, landscaping firms and other establishments have been attending the workshop.

CREES and the CNMI Division of Environmental Quality organized the activity, Cabrera said. He said the agricultural expert from Guam would be discussing proper pesticide use with due regard to environmental protection efforts.

(John Ravelo)

NMC sets math placement test

The Northern Marianas College will be conducting its summer 2004 Math Placement Test in April and May.

The first test will be held on April 23, a Friday, from 10am to 12 noon, at Room D-1 of the NMC campus.

The second exam is on May 14, also from 10am to 12 noon, at Room D-1 of the NMC campus.

Examinees need to bring a picture ID, pen/pencil, and a calculator (optional, may not be shared).

Acceptable picture ID's include the NMC Picture ID, which is needed to be entered into the system; driver's license, passport, other school picture ID, or CNMI immigration card. No ID, no test.

NMC said in a statement that the examination will be on first-come, first-served basis only. It will not be accepting reservations as there are limited seats available.

Admittance to the testing room will not be allowed after the starting time. Math placement slips are good for one year from test date.

SCC to host tax seminar today

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will be sponsoring the 2004 Tax Workshop featuring different speakers who will discuss with participants the tax system in the Commonwealth.

The speakers and their topics are:

- Pauline Kapileo and Elphidia Camacho from Revenue and Tax will be discussing "The ongoing changes of 2003;"

- Edmond Brobesong of Ernst & Young will discuss "Itemized deductions and dependency exemptions;"

- Edgar Aguilar of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu will be presenting "Everything you need to know about filing your corporate tax returns in the CNMI;"

- and David Burger of Burger

DEQ cites CUC for water contamination

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. recently got a citation from the Division of Environmental Quality for bacterial contamination in its water system, complicating its efforts to revive its revoked laboratory certification.

Of the 121 water samples taken from CUC's water system on Saipan, 16 samples were positive for coliform.

The DEQ citation, a copy of

which was released to the media Tuesday, directed the CUC to ensure that the drinking water it provides the public does not contain the bacteria beyond allowable level.

The DEQ also directed the CUC to notify customers and staff about the bacterial contamination pertaining to the January compliance period.

In a separate citation, the DEQ said that CUC's water system on Rota failed to conduct the required repeat water sam-

ples for the same compliance period. Based on the CNMI's drinking water regulations, the DEQ required CUC's Rota water system to gather three repeat bacteriological samples.

The DEQ also issued citations to eight other establishments for violating the drinking water regulations. These establishments included Aqua De Vie, a water company, which failed to gather the required routine water sample from its water system in January.

Besides Aqua De Vie, four

other establishments got similar citations. They include Grace International, Suite Palms, Michigan Garment and Transamerica (Saipan) Corp.

The DEQ also issued four other establishments with citation due to water samples that tested positive for coliform bacteria in January. The establishments are Kae Poong Corp., Merci Corp. 1 and 2. The DEQ said the Merci companies also failed to collect the required repeat samples.

gardenoa islander

+red

2/27

Business

Witness: Broker ordered tip for Stewart

By ERIN McCLAM
AP WRITER

A former brokerage assistant testified Tuesday that his boss ordered him to pass a secret tip to Martha Stewart that led the style maven to trigger her well-timed sale of ImClone Systems stock.

Douglas Faneuil, the government's star witness in the case, said broker Peter Bacanovic ordered him to alert Stewart on Dec. 27, 2001, that the family of ImClone founder Sam Waksal was dumping its shares.

Faneuil said he told Bacanovic, who was on vacation in Florida, about a flurry of selling by the Waksals that morning. He said Bacanovic blurted out: "Oh my God, get Martha on the phone."

Waksal later admitted that he had advance knowledge that the Food and Drug Administration

was about to refuse to review an ImClone drug application - a decision that sent the stock on a sharp decline. Waksal is now serving a prison term of more than seven years.

Faneuil, who was manning Bacanovic's desk at Merrill Lynch & Co. on Dec. 27, testified that he took calls before 10 a.m. from Waksal's accountant and Waksal's two daughters - all demanding that Faneuil sell their ImClone shares.

He said he spoke to Bacanovic, who left a message for Stewart and then ordered Faneuil to tell her of the Waksal sell-off when she called back. Faneuil said he asked his boss whether passing the tip would be appropriate.

"Of course. You must," he said Bacanovic replied. "That's the whole point."

Stewart was unavailable and on her way to a vacation

in Mexico. But she called later in the day and ordered her entire stable of 3,928 shares of ImClone to be sold, the prosecution contends.

The government claims Stewart and Bacanovic cooked up a false story and repeatedly lied to investigators, saying they had a pre-existing arrangement to sell ImClone when it fell to \$60 per share.

Stewart is charged with obstruction of justice, securities fraud and other counts that carry a total of 30 years of prison time. Bacanovic faces up to 25 years if convicted of perjury, conspiracy and other charges. Both would likely get lighter sentences under federal guidelines if convicted.

The testimony of Faneuil, a lanky 28-year-old who was soft-spoken in his answers on the stand, is the most critical piece of the



puzzle that the government says implicates Stewart.

His testimony was delayed by five days after the judge penalized prosecutors for being too slow in turning over an FBI document that defense attorneys say raises questions about Faneuil's credibility.

When court recessed Tuesday, Faneuil had not reached the point in his testimony where he was expected to say he actually told Stewart the Waksals were selling. While Faneuil testified in general terms about improperly passing information from one client to another, details of his exchange with Stewart are expected to come out Wednesday morning.

Lawyers for Bacanovic and Stewart are carefully planning a strategy for Faneuil's cross-examination, which could begin as early as Wednesday. Faneuil had initially supported Bacanovic and Stewart's story, but changed his story in a 2002 plea deal with prosecutors.

The defense is expected to argue that Faneuil was willing to lie to the government to get out of prosecution for his involvement in the ImClone sale.

Airport security firm accused of bribery

By JEFFREY GOLD
AP WRITER

A security company with contracts to protect New York-area airports, bridges and tunnels has been charged with paying bribes to get work and hiring dozens of employees with criminal records.

Haynes Security Inc. and its president, John D'Agostino, were charged with theft, bribery and conspiracy in an indictment announced Tuesday.

Among the allegations: Haynes paid more than \$1,000 in August 2001 for repairs at the home of a Continental Airlines manager in return for consideration for a contract at the Newark airport. No charges were brought against any Continental employees.

The security company was also accused of failing to submit employee fingerprints to police as required by law.

Since 1999, Haynes has held \$12 million in annual contracts to provide security at Newark, Kennedy and LaGuardia airports in New York, as well as the Holland and Lincoln tunnels and the George Washington Bridge.

Those contracts are now under review.

"We need to ensure the highest level of safety, security and service," said Pasquale DiFulco, a spokesman for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which oversees the facilities.

Haynes no longer handles airport passenger screening, which is now overseen by the federal Transportation Security Administration. But the company's unarmed guards still provide security in other parts of the airports, including patrolling parking lots

and checking the identification of vehicles entering runways.

Haynes lawyer Seth T. Taube said the company has cooperated fully in the investigation.

"This is nonsense. The state is desperate for political corruption cases, and this is their way of squeezing Haynes Security to make up stories about politicians," Taube said.

Investigators said Haynes hired 27 convicted criminals—who are barred from holding security posts—to work at the airport and for the state's largest utility, Public Service Electric & Gas. After

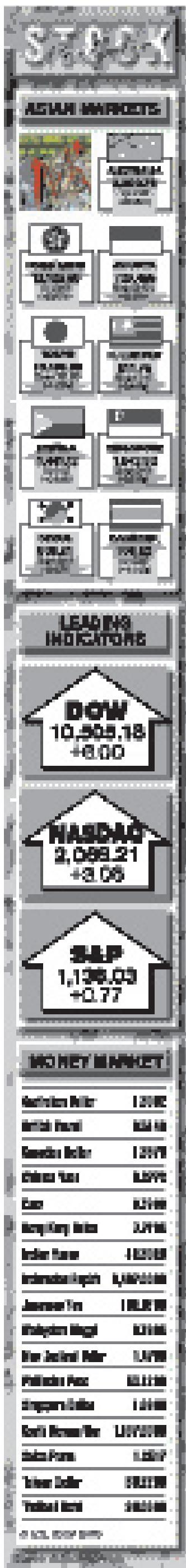
learning of the investigation, the company sent thousands of fingerprints to state police for review, authorities said.

Also indicted was Benjamin R. Riggi, a former PSE&G manager who was accused of accepting a \$7,500 bribe in 2002 to approve Haynes' contract with the utility. Riggi has an unpublished number and could not immediately be reached for comment.

Haynes provided security at the utility's Newark headquarters, and for workers at street-repair sites.

civil service

cuc meet



Stocks stall on terror fears; Dow up 6

By MEG RICHARDS
AP BUSINESS WRITER

Stocks stalled for a second straight session Tuesday, this time because of renewed terrorism fears after the discovery of the toxic powder ricin forced the closure of all Senate buildings in the nation's Capitol.

With few buyers and sellers in the market, trading was volatile and the major indexes alternated between gains and losses, ending the day fractionally higher. The absence of broad-based selling led most traders to believe there had been only limited reaction to the ricin concerns.

"I don't think you can really attribute the choppiness to that," said Brian Williamson, an equity trader at The Boston Compa-

ny Asset Management. "I think there aren't a lot of stories out there in general about the economy and stocks themselves, so that slows things down a little bit."

The Dow Jones industrial average ended the day up 6.00, or 0.1 percent, at 10,505.18.

The broader gauges were also narrowly higher. The Nasdaq composite index gained 3.06, or 0.2 percent, to close at 2,066.21, after five days of declines. The Standard & Poor's 500 index edged up 0.77, or 0.1 percent, to close at 1,136.03.

The discovery of a suspicious, powdery white substance in a Capitol Hill office late Monday raised new concerns about terrorism on domestic soil and invoked memories of the anthrax attacks of 2001. The powder

later tested positive as ricin, and all Senate office buildings were closed Tuesday.

The dollar was weaker against most other currencies Tuesday as security concerns reverberated, and bonds moved higher. Gold prices rose.

As the last major fourth-quarter earnings trickled in, investors were trying to determine whether the largely positive results meshed with economic data. Some analysts said the market was still feeling the impact of last week's statement from the Federal Reserve, which many interpreted as a signal that interest rates could rise sooner rather than later.

"We've seen the market take on a different personality day by day," said Stuart Freeman, chief equity strategist for A.G.

Edwards & Sons. "But I think the biggest issue on the minds of investors is when is the Fed going to raise rates and when is the market going to rotate more in terms of sectors."

There have been hints that investors are slowly shifting their focus away from more speculative small-cap and tech stocks and into less risky, high-value blue chips, but there has not been a strong movement in that direction.

Gainers on the tech-heavy Nasdaq index included Cisco Systems, which closed 21 cents higher at \$26.41 after Sanford Bernstein raised its rating on the leading maker of routers and switches to a "market perform" ahead of its earnings announcement.

Cisco's results, reported after the market closed, beat Wall

Street's expectations by a penny a share on strong sales, but the networking company's stock slid more than 4 percent in after-hours trading. Cisco's performance has been widely watched as an indicator of corporate technology spending.

Decliners slightly outnumbered advancers on the New York Stock Exchange. Consolidated volume was moderate, with 1.93 billion shares traded, compared with 2.05 billion on Monday.

The Russell 2000 index, which tracks smaller company stocks, lost 1.39, or 0.2 percent, to 579.15.

Overseas, Japan's Nikkei stock average finished 1.25 percent lower Tuesday. In Europe, France's CAC-40 lost 0.7 percent, Britain's FTSE 100 gained 0.2 percent and Germany's DAX index closed down 0.4 percent.

Ford, GM post lower sales as Toyota gains

By SARAH KARUSH
AP WRITER

Sales of new cars and trucks fell more than expected in January at the nation's two largest automakers, with market leader General Motors Corp. posting a 1.8 percent decline and rival Ford Motor Co. reporting a 9.8 percent drop.

While the big U.S. automakers were struggling to explain their declines, Toyota Motor Corp. was reporting a 15.8 percent boost in U.S. sales, and Daimler-Chrysler posted sales that were 9.4 percent higher.

"We're committed to pursuing a product and market strategy that will result in stronger retail sales performance," O'Connor said in a statement. "Today we are benefiting from the all-new F-150 and a strong lineup of sport utility vehicles. By year end, we expect to see stronger retail performance in passenger cars."

Ford's F-series trucks posted record January sales of 61,979, up 9.6 percent.

"The most painful declines from the standpoint of our overall performance are the midsize cars - the Ford Taurus and the Mercury Sable,"

Ford sales analyst George Pipas said in a conference call with investors. "Painful in the sense that mid-size cars still represent about 20 percent of total new vehicle sales in the United States."

Taurus sales fell 26.6 percent, and Sable sales were down 47.1 percent.

But Pipas said "help is on the way" in the form of two new mid-size sedans, the Ford Five Hundred and the Mercury Montego.

AP
Fashion designer Richard Tyler and Delta Airlines vice president consumer marketing Patrice Miles share a laugh as they speak to reporters after a news conference in Atlanta, Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2004.

Delta orders classier, sexier uniforms

By HARRY R. WEBER
AP BUSINESS WRITER

Cash-strapped Delta Air Lines has ordered up a makeover of its employee uniforms, hiring a big-name designer who promises a classier—and in some cases, sexier—look for flight attendants, airport agents and other workers.

The carrier said Tuesday that designer Richard Tyler, whose dresses have been worn by stars such as Julia Roberts, Heather Locklear and Jamie Lee Curtis, will be overseeing the uniform change.

"I want them to look sexy and great, but you have to keep that classic look as well," Tyler said in an interview with The Associated Press.

All Delta would say about the new uniforms, to debut in 2006, is that they will be better fitting and more durable. Their color, currently gray, could also change.

The Atlanta-based airline refused to say how much the project will cost—a new outfit Tyler created for actor Pierce Brosnan cost \$3,500—or give specifics about the design. No mannequins or pictures were displayed at a news conference announcing the project.

The potentially expensive move comes amid months of cost-cutting initiatives at Delta, which has lost more than \$3 billion in three years and laid off 16,000 employees since the 2001 terrorist attacks.

Andrea Taylor, a Delta flight attendant and union advocate from New York, said she has concerns about money being spent on new uniforms in light of pay and benefit cuts.

"That money would be much better spent supporting the livelihood of Delta flight attendants," she said.

But Taylor acknowledged the current uniforms are not exactly

fashion-forward. "We have been referred to as prison wardens wearing them," she said.

Delta officials said the decision to redesign uniforms is a "wise investment" that will boost morale among employees and increase the airline's bottom line in the long run.

Uniforms for flight attendants, gate and ticket agents and airport lounge officials will get a complete makeover—from their shirts or blouses to their pants, gloves, hats and scarves. Technical operations workers, maintenance crews and baggage handlers will see minor changes in their outfits.

As many as 35,000 of the airline's 60,000 employees will be affected. Delta's pilots, locked in a protracted battle with management over wage concessions, are a notable exception. Their uniforms, which have not changed substantially in decades, will not be redesigned.

GM's truck sales were up 12.8 percent. Ford's truck sales fell 4.7 percent, despite the continuing success of its F-150 pickup. Chrysler sold 21.5 percent more trucks than in the previous January.

"January sales results were below expectations,"



World

Iraq blasts kill 143 on Shiite holy day

By HAMZA HENDAWI
and TAREK AL-ISSAWI
AP WRITERS

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP)—Suicide bombers set off simultaneous attacks on Shiite Muslim shrines crowded with pilgrims in two Iraqi cities Tuesday, killing at least 143 people and turning the holiest day on the Shiite calendar into the bloodiest since the fall of Saddam Hussein.

Unofficial casualty reports, however, put the toll in Baghdad and Karbala as high as 223. At least 430 were wounded. Authorities said there were about a dozen bombers in those cities as well as in Basra, several of whom were captured before they were able to detonate their explosives.

U.S. officials and Iraqi leaders named an al-Qaida-linked militant, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, as a “prime suspect” for the attacks, saying he seeks to spark a Sunni-Shiite civil war to wreck U.S. plans to hand over power to the Iraqis on June 30.

But some Shiites lashed out at U.S. forces. Iraq’s most powerful Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Hussein al-Sistani, blamed the Americans for not providing security.

Shiite, Sunni and Kurdish members of Iraq’s U.S.-appointed Governing Council pleaded with Iraqis to remain united—an attempt to avert reprisals. The blasts fanned fear and anger at a time when leaders of the Shiite majority are pressing for more power in a future government after years of oppression under Saddam.



said five suicide bombers struck in Karbala, using TNT, nails and ball bearings.

In Baghdad, wooden carts for ferrying elderly pilgrims were used instead as impromptu gurneys, stacked with the wounded and dead. Torn bodies were sprawled across the mosaic-walled courtyard inside the Kazimiya shrine, and thousands of shoes—left at the shrine’s doorstep as the faithful prayed inside—were blown across the square.

“I heard a deafening explosion and bodies began to fly and land next to me,” said Amar Dawas, sitting atop a pile of tangled mattresses, head down and scratching his left heel.

“There were also hands and legs which we had to bring down from the roof,” said the 24-year-old worker, whose white T-shirt was stained with blood.

Three suicide bombers attacked Kazimiya shrine, killing 58 and wounding 200, while at least one suicide attacker blew himself up at Karbala, where 85 were killed and 230 were wounded, U.S. Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt said.

Iraqis walk among the victims and debris left by one of several bomb blasts which exploded in densely-occupied areas, during the holy day of Ashoura, a Shiite festival, in the holy city of Karbala, Iraq, Tuesday, March 2, 2004.

The attacks forced the delay of a milestone in the path toward the U.S. handover—the planned Thursday signing of an interim constitution approved by the Governing Council.

“What we’ve seen today in these attacks are desperation moves by al Qaida-affiliated groups that recognize the threat that a successful transition in Iraq represents,” Vice President Dick Cheney told CNN.

The devastating explosions came on the climactic day of the 10-day Shiite mourning festival Ashoura commemorating the 7th century martyrdom of the prophet Muhammad’s grandson Hussein.

The festival was also the oc-

casion of an attack on a Shiite procession two hours later Tuesday in Quetta, Pakistan. At least 42 people—including two attackers—were killed and over 160 were wounded. In Pakistan, the annual rites often spark violence between the Sunni majority and Shiite minority.

Tens of thousands of pilgrims from Iraq, Iran and other Shiite communities were massed around the golden-domed Imam Hussein mosque in the holy city of Karbala and the Kazimiya shrine in Baghdad when the explosions went off about 10 a.m.

In Karbala, women tripped over their long, black robes as they ran. Police wept at the sight of the mangled and torn bodies

of pilgrims, their blood pooling in the streets.

“I was walking away from the tea stand, when I heard someone shouting ‘Allahu Akbar.’ I turned my head and saw a tall, bearded man,” said Ali Haidar.

“A split second later, he exploded, his clothes flying upward. The sound was deafening. Bodies, feet, arms were everywhere. Pieces of flesh flew at me.”

Hameed al-Kafaei, spokesman for the Governing Council,

Attacks expose divisions in Pakistan, Iraq

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Attacks on Shiite Muslims in Pakistan and Iraq killed at least 185 people on Tuesday and exposed the deep fissures that have opened in two key battlegrounds in the U.S.-led war on terror.

The carnage—while not necessarily linked—apparently was carried out by militants marching to the same anti-American drumbeat and feeding off sectarian tensions that have been around for centuries.

“The terrorist attacks in both these places are by people who follow the same philosophy of religious extremism,” said Mehdi Hassan, a political analyst and retired professor from Punjab University in Lahore. “Pakistan and Iraq have one thing in common—and that is the policies of the United States and the resentment of those policies.”

There have been no claims of responsibility in either

country for the attacks on one of the holiest days on the Shiite calendar, but the killings bore a similar pattern. In the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, three suicide bombers detonated explosives at the Kazimiya shrine, killing 58 and wounding 200. In the holy city of Karbala in southern Iraq, at least one suicide attacker blew himself up and preset explosives detonated, killing 85 and wounding over 200.

Less than two hours later, at least three attackers in the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta opened fire and hurled grenades at a procession of Shiite worshippers, then blew themselves up as troops moved in. Two attackers died and the other was in custody in critical condition. At least 42 people were killed, including the attackers.

Tuesday was Ashoura, the climax of the 10-day festival marking the killing of the 7th-century Shiite saint Imam Hussein, which is commemorated

across the Muslim world and often sparks bloodshed.

U.S. officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, couldn’t rule out any connections among the attacks in Iraq and Pakistan, and are looking into what—if any—links there may be. At this point, one official said, there isn’t any evidence indicating the attacks were coordinated.

Pakistani Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said there was no evidence to indicate the Iraq and Pakistan attacks were linked.

But others said the attacks bore the hallmarks of international terror.

In Iraq, U.S. Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt identified Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, an al-Qaida-linked Jordanian militant who trained with Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan, as a chief suspect in the attacks there, and said the aim was to spark a Sunni-Shiite civil war.

CJPA

Philippe says he's Haiti's military chief

By PAISLEY DODDS and IAN JAMES
AP WRITERS

PORTE-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Rebel leader Guy Philippe declared himself the new chief of Haiti's military, which was disbanded by ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and pledged Tuesday that rebel forces will disarm.

Philippe then said he would arrest Prime Minister Yvon Neptune on corruption charges.

"The country is in my hands!" Philippe announced on Radio Signal FM.

Philippe, flanked by other

rebel leaders and senior officers of Haiti's police force, told reporters, "I am the chief," then clarified that he meant "the military chief."

He said he was "not interested in politics" and was ready to follow the orders of interim President Boniface Alexandre, chief justice of the Supreme Court, who was installed Sunday.

Asked whether he would disarm if requested to, he said, "We will."

He then summoned 20 police commanders to meet with him Tuesday and warned that if they failed to appear he would arrest them.

U.S. Marines guarded Neptune's office in the Petionville suburb, where Philippe was headed with hundreds of supporters in a convoy impeded by adoring and cheering crowds.

Neptune's whereabouts were not immediately known. Local radio reported that he was evacuated by helicopter. It was also unclear whether American or French marines—who arrived in recent days to secure diplomatic missions and other sites—would try to protect him. Neptune is a top member of Aristide's Lavalas party and his former presidential spokesman.

In a phone call to The Associated Press, Philippe said Neptune would face corruption charges. The rebels appear to be taking advantage of a power vacuum in the wake of Aristide's abrupt departure Sunday.

Shortly before that phone call, Philippe appeared on the second-floor balcony of the colonnaded former army headquarters before a cheering crowd of hundreds. A burly rebel standing next to Philippe urged them to accompany the rebel chief to Neptune's house.

"Arrest Neptune!" the crowd chanted.

In Washington, Assistant U.S. Secretary of State Roger

Noriega said Philippe "is not in control of anything but a ragtag band of people."

The international military buildup in Haiti will make Philippe's role "less and less central in Haitian life. And I think he will probably want to make himself scarce," Noriega told the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

"We have sent that message to him. He obviously hasn't received it."

Philippe, who arrived in Port-au-Prince in a rebel convoy

Monday, apparently plans to transform his fighters into a reconstituted Haitian army.

The army ousted Aristide in 1991 but then was disbanded by him in 1995, a year after he was returned to power by 20,000 American troops.

Meanwhile, killings continued in the seaside, fetid capital.

At least two more bodies showed up Tuesday on streets still littered with charred barricades set up by Aristide supporters, who rampaged and looted the capital before he fled Sunday.



Philippe



ICY RIDE

A bicycle sits covered with snow after a snow storm hit Vitoria, northern Spain. AP

Bush, Pope nominated for Nobel Peace

OSLO, Norway (AP)—President Bush, Pope John Paul II and the two U.N. officials at the heart of the effort to find weapon of mass destruction in Iraq are among the nominees for the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize.

Tuesday's nominating deadline brought the number of candidates for the prestigious prize to 194—50 organizations and 144 individuals, said Geir Lundestad, secretary of the secretive awards committee. The winner of the \$1.3 million award will be announced in mid-October.

The five-member committee keeps the list of candidates

secret for 50 years, only releasing the number of nominations it receives, but those making the nominations often announce their choice.

This year, those nominated include Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair, French President Jacques Chirac, former Czech President Vaclav Havel, the pope, the European Union, former chief U.N. weapons inspector Hans Blix and Mohamed ElBaradei, who still heads the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Other known candidates for the 2004 award are kidnapped Colombian politician Ingrid

Betancourt, Cuban dissident Oswaldo Paya and jailed Israeli technician Mordechai Vanunu,



Bush



Pope John Paul II

for exposing his country's nuclear weapons program.

Sen. Richard Lugar and former Sen. Sam Nunn were nominated for their program to dismantle nuclear weapons left over from the Soviet Union.

Other likely, but not confirmed, nominations include the Salvation Army; South African Adurrazack Achmat and the Treatment Action Campaign for their work fighting AIDS; the International Solidarity Movement, a pro-Palestinian activist group; Russian anti-war group Mothers in Black; and Italian charity The Community of Sant' Egidio.

The award is always presented on Dec. 10, the anniversary of the death of its founder, Swedish industrialist Alfred Nobel. The peace prize is awarded in Oslo, and the other Nobel prizes are presented in the Swedish capital, Stockholm.

said they were concerned the planes could be used as weapons, but he indicated they gave few details.

He said Mexico would continue to work to protect American and Mexican lives.

Fox said his top priority during a meeting with President Bush this weekend will be to ensure a migration accord is ap-

proved in the United States.

Fox said he would also urge the United States to treat Mexican visitors in the same way it treats those from Canada.

Migration, security, water issues and deportations are all on the agenda for the Bush-Fox meeting Friday and Saturday at Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas.

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Venezuela's elections council ruled Tuesday that the opposition lacked enough signatures to force a recall referendum against President Hugo Chavez. Rioting over council delays had spread from Caracas to other cities before the decision.

Chavez opponents say they submitted more than 3.4 million signatures. Some 2.4 million are needed for a recall election.

But council President Francisco Carrasquero announced that just 1.83 million signatures were valid. Another 876,016 signatures may be valid—if citizens confirm that they indeed signed the petition, Carrasquero said.

The council said that voters whose signatures were under dispute would have between March 18 and March 22 to report to voting centers to confirm that they indeed had signed the petition.

Venezuela's opposition claims that such a monumental task, in-

Palestinian security forces, an element of control.

Israel and the United States have been pressing the Palestinians to consolidate more than a dozen overlapping and competing security forces and wrest control from Arafat, but to no avail.

Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia said Arafat agreed to the financial reform step at a Cabinet meeting on Tuesday. "President Arafat approved paying all the security men through the banks," Qureia said after the meeting.

The 2004 Palestinian budget, approved in January, projected a 50 percent deficit of \$800 million, underlining the critical role of foreign aid. The Palestinian economy has been decimated by more than three years of Mideast violence.

Palestinians blame Israel for punitive travel restrictions, but Israelis cite the need for security measures after thousands of attacks, including more than 100 suicide bombings.

Venezuela panel rules on Chavez recall

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The council said that voters whose signatures were under dispute would have between March 18 and March 22 to report to voting centers to confirm that they indeed had signed the petition.

"We are not negotiating the signatures," said opposition leader Juan Fernandez.

Mexico said to cooperate in anti-terror fight

MEXICO CITY (AP)—President Vicente Fox said Tuesday there was no evidence terrorists had operated from Mexico, but the country would continue to cancel flights and take other precautions.

"You don't have to have all of the evidence before acting," he said in an interview with The Associated Press.

Fox said U.S. officials had

added that U.S. concern was "enough for us."

Fox's government was criticized at home after it canceled several flights to Los Angeles and allowed FBI agents to work visibly at Mexican airports around the New Year period because of U.S. warnings of possible terrorist attacks.

Fox said his top priority during a meeting with President Bush this weekend will be to ensure a migration accord is ap-

proved in the United States.

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Environment

Life & Style

Jackson's phone records seized

By TIM MOLLOY

AP WRITER

Investigators in the Michael Jackson child molestation case have seized about 100 pages of phone records, videos of the pop star, and a DVD of a party at his Neverland Ranch, according to court documents.

The documents released Monday included search warrants from January, law enforcement affidavits requesting them and lists of seized items.

Santa Barbara County Superior Court Judge Rodney Melville agreed last month to release the records, but ordered details to be omitted; the resulting documents do not include such information as where the warrants were served and descriptions of the items taken.

Whether the items will have any significance in the case wasn't immediately clear. Jackson attorney Benjamin Brafman cited a gag order in declining to comment.

Phone records with the number omitted were in response to a warrant dated Jan. 22, 2004—the same day comedy club owner Jamie Masada, who introduced Jackson to his young accuser,

held a news conference saying he had received threatening phone calls telling him not to speak about the case.

It was unclear if the phone records involved the threats, and Masada did not return a call Monday.

Documents released Monday also show that during a Jan. 30 search of an unidentified property, investigators seized computers, photos, videos, three videos of Jackson on compact discs and a DVD of a party at Jackson's Neverland Ranch.

A Jan. 31 search yielded computers, documents—some involving Jackson—and videotapes. The address of the property was removed, but law enforcement officials confirmed on Jan. 31 that they were searching the Calabasas residence of one of Jackson's former producers, Marc Schaffel.

Schaffel has an unlisted number and could not be located Monday.

Also Monday, Michael Jackson unveiled a new Web site, www.mjsource.com, that merges a celebration of his music career with news and background on his criminal trial—including short biographies of his attorneys and a calendar listing upcoming court dates.

Pop star Michael Jackson reaches for his umbrella as he leaves the Santa Maria Courthouse following his arraignment on sexual molestation charges on Jan. 16, 2004, in Santa Maria, Calif.

AP



Need some support? Help is available online

By TAMARA E. HOLMES

SPECIAL TO THE BALTIMORE SUN

Many of us start the new year with resolutions for improving our lives. While some of these good intentions are often forgotten by the end of February, the Internet community may provide enough support to improve your odds of sticking to your plans.

Online support groups are virtual communities where like-minded individuals share stories of inspiration and encouragement designed to help one another to achieve a particular goal.

Some online support sites consist of forums that let users post messages and respond to other messages at will. Other sites are chat-based, meaning they provide a chat room people can visit at any time and message like-minded individuals in real time.

Finally, there are support sites that are chat-based but have set times when members of the group can log on and chat about their respective situations.

One of the most common resolutions each year has to do with weight loss and healthy eating. On the Internet, support groups exist not just for dieting but for all aspects of food consumption.

Such weight-loss support groups include the Eating Disorder Message Forum (www.eating-disorder.org), Male Eating Disorders (health.groups.yahoo.com/group/maleeatingdisorders/), and Picky Eating Adults (www.pickyeatingadults.com/index.html).

If you are looking for help shedding a few pounds and need some extra hand-holding, you might check out Mydietybuddy.com. For a \$5.95 monthly fee, you'll be paired with other dieters who have similar goals or challenges so that you can form your own online support system.

Often when people desire to lose weight, they also hope to improve their health by exercising. Support groups exist online to help with this task as well, including an exercise message board at www.healthboards.com/boards/index.php.

Another popular resolution is to get a better handle on financial issues. If you are looking to get out of debt or hoping to improve your financial situation, you can find online support groups at Debtors Anonymous (www.debtorsanonymous.org). The site offers support areas for different types of people, including compulsive spenders and business owners who have racked up an enormous amount of debt.

HealthyPlace.com is one of the best places on the Web for support on mental and emotional health issues. There, you can find advice, support and guidance from support groups dedicated to depression, anxiety disorders, relationship troubles and more.

HealthyPlace.com offers several different levels of support. Forums where users can post and read messages at will are open 24 hours a day. And some chat rooms are always open. There also are guided support groups that meet in designated chat areas at a set time so that members

'The Passion' spurs religious book sales

By HILLEL ITALIE

AP NATIONAL WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Dan Brown's "The Da Vinci Code" is a million-selling historical thriller that has angered Catholics by attacking the clergy and implying Jesus and Mary Magdalene were married.

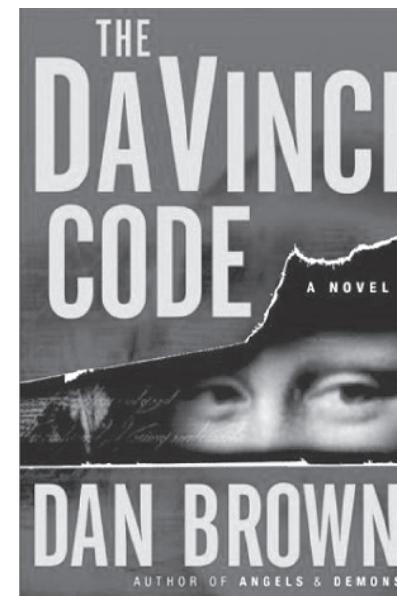
Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" is a brutal box-office hit that has angered Jewish and Christian leaders, who allege that the movie could encourage anti-Semitism.

As theology, they are far, far apart. But as phenomena, they have had a common effect, driving sales for a wave of Christian-themed books, some of them highly controversial.

Thanks to Gibson's film, which features a graphically violent portrayal of the crucifixion, religious publishers such as Tyndale, Tan Books and Crossway have seen enormous jumps in sales. Tyndale reports that a 150,000 first printing of the film's companion book, called "The Passion," sold out so quickly that some stores may have to wait up to two weeks before an additional printing of 250,000 fully arrives.

"It's a bit of a sore spot for us," says Dan Balow, executive director of international services for Tyndale, based in Carol Stream, Ill. "Most stores were somewhat skeptical about the book, especially since it's a big coffee table edition. And now many of them don't have copies."

Gibson has cited "The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ," a 19th-century memoir that describes Jewish mobs as "cruel" and "hardhearted," as a source for his movie. Sales have



jumped from under 3,000 for all of 2002 to 17,000 just last month, according to Tan Books, a publisher based in Rockville, Ill.

A book unrelated to Gibson's film, "The Passion of Jesus Christ," by Baptist minister John Piper, came out in January. Published by Crossway Books with a first printing of 175,000, "The Passion" now has 1.6 million copies in print.

"We've sold a number through stores, but a lot of them are going through John Piper's ministry," says publicist Kathy Jacobs of Crossway, based in St. Paul, Minn. "So many churches are getting involved. The book isn't about the movie but it answers a lot of questions the movie might raise."

Meanwhile, "The Da Vinci Code" has more than 6 million copies in print since being published a year ago and has created a mini-industry of best sellers, even as

some Catholic retailers decline to stock it. Brown's novel speculates that Jesus and Mary Magdalene were married, for which no documentary evidence exists, and depicts the Catholic clergy as a pack of sinister liars.

"Blasphemy is delivered in a soft voice with a knowing chuckle," freelance writer Sandra Miesel observed last September in Crisis, a conservative Catholic magazine.

Brown's "Angels and Demons," a religious thriller published in 2000, now has 4 million copies in print and is currently selling 100,000 copies a week. "Holy Blood, Holy Grail," a nonfiction work first published in 1982 and an acknowledged inspiration for "The Da Vinci Code," has more than 750,000 copies in print. Co-authored by Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh and Henry Lincoln, "Holy Blood" has spent four months on The New York Times' list of nonfiction paperback best sellers even as many have disputed its findings.

Gibson's movie was based on an old-fashioned but distinctive reading of the Gospels—so distinctive, critics say, that "The Passion" could revive the notion that Jews were collectively responsible for Christ's death. But Brown has been criticized for being too liberal-minded, favoring the ancient world's rival secret-knowledge ("Gnostic") sects and depicting centuries-old folk tales as fact.

One of Brown's sources, Elaine Pagels' "The Gnostic Gospels," sold over 100,000 copies in 2003, seven times higher than the year before. Sales have also gone up for other books by Pagels, a popular scholar of Gnosticism, including "The Origin of Satan" and "Adam, Eve and the Serpent."

Whack! HBO series ‘The Sopranos’ returns

By FRAZIER MOORE
AP TELEVISION WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—“The Sopranos” is back, and all is wrong with the world. The TV drama every other drama series is measured against is returning to face the ultimate challenge: getting measured against its own past.

Great news! It measures up—especially after last season, which didn’t.

Last season, “The Sopranos” was gripped by tension. Week after week, the pressure built. As if resigned to inevitable doom, mobster Tony Soprano and everyone around him—and, to a large extent, the series—sank into a funk.

Sure, there were moments of explosive (if temporary) release. But just two of the 13 episodes delivered a solid dramatic payoff: when Tony offed Ralphie and then offed his head, and in the finale when Tony waged war with his wife, Carmela, and she threw him out of his house.

That was way back yonder in December 2002. Now, as “The Sopranos” begins its fifth season Sunday at 9 p.m. EST on HBO, it seems headed on a different, more rewarding track.

(Spoiler warning: “Sopranos” fans who want a pristine viewing experience should stop reading here.)

Make no mistake, any hour of “The Sopranos” beats an hour of nearly anything else on film. But the four new episodes made available for review do more than introduce fresh turmoil into Tony’s life. They introduce a welcome new theme enhancing last year’s gloom: a sense of general befuddlement.

Tony (series star James Gandolfini), his wife (Edie Falco), and other key characters have lost their bearings. Too much has changed, too much is uncertain. Can they regain their footing before it’s too late? That seems to be this season’s prevailing question.

One cause of shattered equilibrium is the arrival of several new mobsters who, jailed during the crackdown on organized crime in the 1980s, are out after serving their time.

“Class of 2004,” Uncle Junior (Dominic Chianese) sums up sourly—“old rats on a new ship.”



James Gandolfini as Tony Soprano appears in this scene from HBO’s “The Sopranos,” in this undated publicity photo.

What will be the impact of these new “rats” on “The Sopranos”?

“We could be looking at a period of potentially violent power struggles,” declares a Mafia expert on a TV interview show Tony is watching—to which Tony grumbles, “They gotta paint everything the worst, these TV news people.”

It isn’t long before former mob boss Feech La Manna (Robert Loggia) is telling Tony, “Now that I’m out, I’d like to get back in the game.”

Tony warily agrees, but adds, “I don’t want you stepping on anybody’s toes.”

“Me?” oozes Feech in his gravelly voice, “I’m Fred Astaire.”

Also back on the streets (in the second episode) is a cousin, Tony Blundetto (played by Steve Buscemi), whom Soprano wants back in the family business.

No thanks, says “Tony B.” Once a rising star in the mob, he now intends to go straight.

He wants to be a massage therapist, and he doesn’t mean running a massage parlor. In the meantime, he takes a job with a linen supply firm whose accounts include the Bada Bing. He’s literally handling Tony’s dirty laundry. Will he be able to resist Tony’s entreaties to handle more?

The life of Tony’s nephew Christopher (Michael Imperioli) hangs in the balance: He’s kicked booze and drugs. But how long can he hold out?

And Christopher’s fiancee Adriana (Drea de Matteo) remains caught between a rock and a hard place: The FBI is forcing her to inform on Chris-

topher and the rest of the mob. How long can she reconcile her two conflicting lives, not to mention her guilt?

Even Tony’s psychiatrist, Dr. Melfi (Lorraine Bracco), is confronting new issues, thanks to Tony, her longtime client who now wants to be more.

Sunday’s episode begins with a scene recalling previous season openers: the morning newspaper in the Soprano driveway. But Tony, no longer living there, isn’t fetching it.

A bit later, the series adds to its gallery of odd and powerful images with a glimpse of raw potential violence that is all the more unexpected for its having no connection with organized crime.

Message: More than ever before, everything is on the loose, and danger could be lurking anywhere.

No wonder Tony—who now bunks in, of all places, the shabby house of his despicable late mother—drifts back home on any pretext. There he scraps with Carmela, barks at sullen son A.J. (Robert Iler), chugs orange juice out of the carton as if he still ruled the roost, and pretends none of the fault is his.

It’s all part of a scramble for some sense of normality, for getting back a world that’s familiar and reliable. Happily for viewers, the search on “The Sopranos” this season could come with many new pitfalls.

CBS hopeful sitcom ‘Raymond’ will return

NEW YORK (AP)—CBS President Leslie Moonves said he’s guardedly optimistic that his most popular comedy, “Everybody Loves Raymond,” will return next season—but he’s discussed a spinoff just in case.

Moonves said he hoped to conclude negotiations on a return of the Monday night comedy within the next few weeks.

“We’re talking, which is good,” Moonves said Tuesday. “It’s better than not talking.”

The show’s two creators, star Ray Romano and executive producer Phil Rosenthal, have expressed worries about exhausting available stories.

Moonves has argued that with “Friends,” “Frasier” and “Sex and the City” ending their

runs this year, a “Raymond” finale would be overshadowed.

CBS has talked about a potential spinoff involving Brad Garrett, who plays Romano’s brother in the series, but Moonves said no decision will be made until the future of “Raymond” is determined.

A potential series finale for “Everybody Loves Raymond” has already been written, Moonves said.

“Everybody Loves Raymond” is the second most popular comedy on television behind NBC’s “Friends,” averaging 17.8 million viewers each week, according to Nielsen Media Research.

WALLACE

Warner Music slashes jobs, ousts execs

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The transformation of Warner Music Group under new chief Edgar Bronfman Jr. began in earnest Tuesday as the company ousted several top executives and said it would slash 1,000 jobs at the largest privately owned record company.

The layoffs, which represent 20 percent of the company’s global work force, are slated to be completed over the next month.

The company is also consolidating the back-office functions of its Elektra Entertainment Group and The Atlantic Group labels, the first step in a plan to combine them into one label.

The cuts are widespread, encompassing jobs at the labels, corporate office and IT departments, among others. Upper management was not spared, including three senior executives: Val Azzoli, the co-chairman of Atlantic

Records; the label’s co-president Ron Shapiro, and Sylvia Rhone, the chairman of Elektra.

The changes at Warner, home to acts like Kid Rock, Madonna and Metallica, are part of a restructuring plan intended to save the company about \$200 million a year so it can be in a better position to compete.

The recording industry has been struggling in recent years to overcome declining CD sales

amid the rise of CD-burning and online music file-sharing.

“While the restructuring necessitates some painful changes, they are vital to creating a more agile organization that will allow us to remain competitive in a rapidly evolving marketplace,” Bronfman, Warner’s chairman and chief executive, said in a statement.

Spokesman Will Tanous said Bronfman was not available for interviews.

Zeta-Jones loses Wales planning dispute

LONDON (AP)—Catherine Zeta-Jones and her parents are building a home on an estate in a fishing village in southern Wales, and they want privacy there.

But they appear to be losing an effort to force one of their neighbors to stop managing his telecommunications business from the garage of his home.

On Tuesday, the Swansea Council planning committee voted to allow Steve Gwynn to keep doing that for the next two years, despite the \$1.85 million Zeta-Jones home being built.

Eight letters of objection received by councilors included one from a lawyer representing Zeta-Jones' parents, Dai and Pat, who are believed to be about to move there.

"Our clients purchased the plot and agreed to the construction of a substantial dwelling on the clear understanding that it would be private, prestigious and exclusive, and ex-

tremely safe and secure as it was a 'gated' development," their letter said.

"Our clients would also be extremely concerned and alarmed that the privacy and security of the development would be jeopardized by virtue of the visits to site by members of staff, customers and delivery vehicles of Mr. Gwynn."

Zeta-Jones, who was born in Swansea, won a supporting-actress Oscar for playing jazz-singing murderess Velma Kelly in 2002's "Chicago." She is married to actor Michael Douglas.

Gwynn said his business only receives one to three visits a week, usually by couriers delivering packages.

But Councilor Howard Morgan told the committee that during a site visit by councilors last month, a group of foreign tourists were gathered outside.

"You would think they had come to visit a shrine," he said.

Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones pose as Nicole Kidman is honored by EIF's Womens Cancer Research Fund and Honorary Chairs in Los Angeles, Monday, March 1, 2004.

AP



Timberlake studies for reporter film role

LOS ANGELES (AP)—So what's Justin Timberlake uncovering now? Timberlake, who ripped away part of Janet Jackson's costume at the Super Bowl halftime show, tagged along with Associated Press reporter Bob Porterfield last week to get a taste for journalism.

The Grammy-winning singer will play a reporter who uncovers an elite team of corrupt police in the upcoming film "Edison," starring Kevin Spacey, Morgan Freeman and LL Cool J. Shooting is expected to begin in Canada in the coming weeks.

Timberlake created a stir at the downtown county courthouse as he filled out an application for legal documents and pored over them with Porterfield in a public viewing area for about 45 minutes.

They pulled an old lawsuit filed by Arnold Schwarzenegger, Bruce Willis and Denzel Washington against an electronics firm that allegedly used their likeness in ads without permission.

"He was interested in learning how you retrieve these public records. Basically, I showed him how you find them, how you request them," Porterfield said Monday.

Porterfield, a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner who teaches graduate-school journalism, was impressed. "I thought he was sharp. He seemed attentive and interested in learning this stuff. He has a real interest in developing his part. He took quite a few notes."

Clark sued for age discrimination

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP)—A 76-year-old game show producer sued Dick Clark Monday, alleging the 74-year-old Clark called him a "dinosaur" and refused to hire him because of his age.

Ralph Andrews, who produced the 1960s and '70s game shows "It Takes Two," "By the Numbers" and "You Don't Say," filed the suit in Superior Court.

Andrews' attorney, Phillip R. Maltin, said Clark's actions violate the Fair Employment and Housing Act, which makes it illegal for an employer "to discriminate against a person who applies for a position based upon that person's age."

The suit also names Dick Clark Productions and one of its owners, Mosaic Media Group, and seeks general and punitive damages.

Paul Shefrin, a spokesman for Dick Clark Productions, said the company does not comment on



Dick Clark, shown in New York City on May 12, 2003.

pending litigation. A message left after business hours for Mosaic Media Group was not immediately returned.

In the complaint, Andrews says he spoke off and on for more than a year with Clark and other executives about joining the company and was told he would be considered for any openings.

But when he wrote Clark to say he was interested in available positions, Clark wrote back, allegedly turning Andrews down because of his age.

"I have great respect and admiration for your accomplishments, and wish you success in your desire to 'get back to work,'" Clark's letter read, according to the suit.

"(But) the last development guy we hired was 27 years old. Another person who is joining our staff next week is 30. People our age are considered dinosaurs! The business is being run by 'The Next Generation.'"

Clark added, "On a brighter note, Ralph, please know that if any project comes up where we could use your experienced hands, I wouldn't hesitate to call you."

Andrews told The Associated Press he has known Clark for 40 years and hired him on several game shows, including a brief 1997 revival of "It Takes Two."

Maine City hopes for Stephen King crowds

LEWISTON, Maine (AP)—Officials in Maine's second-largest city hope an upcoming Stephen King miniseries about a haunted hospital will bring an influx of tourists eager to visit the places portrayed in the show.

"This is the type of publicity that the city could never afford to buy," Lewiston Mayor Lionel Guay said. "This is going to be national."

The 15-hour "Kingdom Hospital," which begins Wednesday night on ABC, was shot in Vancouver, British Columbia, but is set in Lewiston.

King knows the area well: He grew up in Durham, attended Lisbon High School and often visited Lewiston to use the library and go to the movies.

ABC has been promoting "Kingdom Hospital" for weeks; a book, "The Journals of Eleanor Druse," accompanies the series and is based on a character played by Diane Ladd. The network also has built a corporate-style Web site, www.kingdomhospitalofmaine.com, to represent the fictitious hospital.

The narrative begins when a man is struck by a van on a rural road and taken to the Lewiston hospital for care.

It's inspired by a Danish miniseries, "The Kingdom," by Lars von Trier. King adapted it, loosely basing some events on his own 1999 accident, in which a van struck him while he was walking along a roadside.



Author Stephen King addresses the 2003 National Book Awards dinner in New York City, after being presented the 2003 Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters, Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2003.

Alcohol fuels fire of conflict between parent and teenager

By AVIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I am a normal 13-year-old kid. I play soccer and the saxophone and am serious about both.

Lately, I'm noticing my mom's drinking. She threatens all kinds of things at night: no soccer, no sax, no social life. She gets argumentative and repeats herself. We've been getting into fights because she forgets things and says things she doesn't mean.

The other night, she grabbed and pushed me. When I told her to stop, she said she has nothing to lose, but I do.

Plus my dad is kind of timid, so he goes along with whatever she says. HELP!

CRAZY IN COLORADO

DEAR CRAZY: Your mother's drinking is out of control, and her behavior is destructive. Your father probably hopes that if he ignores it, it will go away. Please clip this letter and give it to him. He needs to contact Al-Anon, and you should attend some Alateen meetings.

Alateen is a fellowship of young people whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking. An active adult member of Al-Anon serves as a sponsor for each group. The number for both Al-Anon and Alateen is (888) 425-2666, and the Web site for both is www.al-anon.alateen.org.

□ □ □ □

DEAR ABBY: Last summer, my high school sweetheart and I linked up again at our class reunion. We live in different states. A few months later, I visited her. Two months after that, she came to visit me for a week. We got along great.

We talk constantly and are in love with each other all over again. Neither of us has children or other obligations. She has agreed to move here, get her own place for a while, and let nature take its course. I can't see myself without her.

Her friends think she might be acting too hastily. Do you think we need more time? We are both 38 and are ready to spend our lives together. What do you think?

CONFUSED IN KENTUCKY

DEAR CONFUSED: You are both adults. Since there is nothing keeping her in the town where she lives, I see no reason why she shouldn't relocate to yours. Her friends mean well, I'm sure, but they are not the ones who should be deciding whether her decision is too hasty, and I think they should butt out.

□ □ □ □

DEAR ABBY: I have been dating "Andre" since I was 12 and he was 13. We are now 26 and 27. Like any couple, we've had arguments. He's also cheated on me. We have three children. He also has four children with other women.

I am confused, Abby. We have a lot of trust issues. I have my guard up all the time. I love him. He was my first sexual partner. I want to get married, but I can't help thinking he's going to cheat again.

How can I learn to trust him totally?

C.D. IN CHICAGO

DEAR C.D.: Being of sound mind and body, that would be impossible. Your boyfriend has proven at least four times that he is not trustworthy in the fidelity department. Thirteen years of this distrust and torture are enough already. If I were you, I'd talk to a lawyer, establish child support and let him go. He may be 27, but he still hasn't grown up.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write *Dear Abby* at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Good advice for everyone—teens to seniors—is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)



Dear Abby

Pastimes

Round 1 to Thomas as Knicks beat Pacers



NEW YORK (AP) — Two of Isiah Thomas' acquisitions, Penny Hardaway and Stephon Marbury, made several big plays down the stretch Tuesday to lead the New York Knicks past the Pacers 97-90, ending Indiana's three-game winning streak.

"I knew he (Thomas) wanted this win real badly. We definitely did not want to let him down," Hardaway said. "I think he wanted to see how we were going to respond to a good team coming in here and see what we were going to do, and I think we stepped up to the challenge."

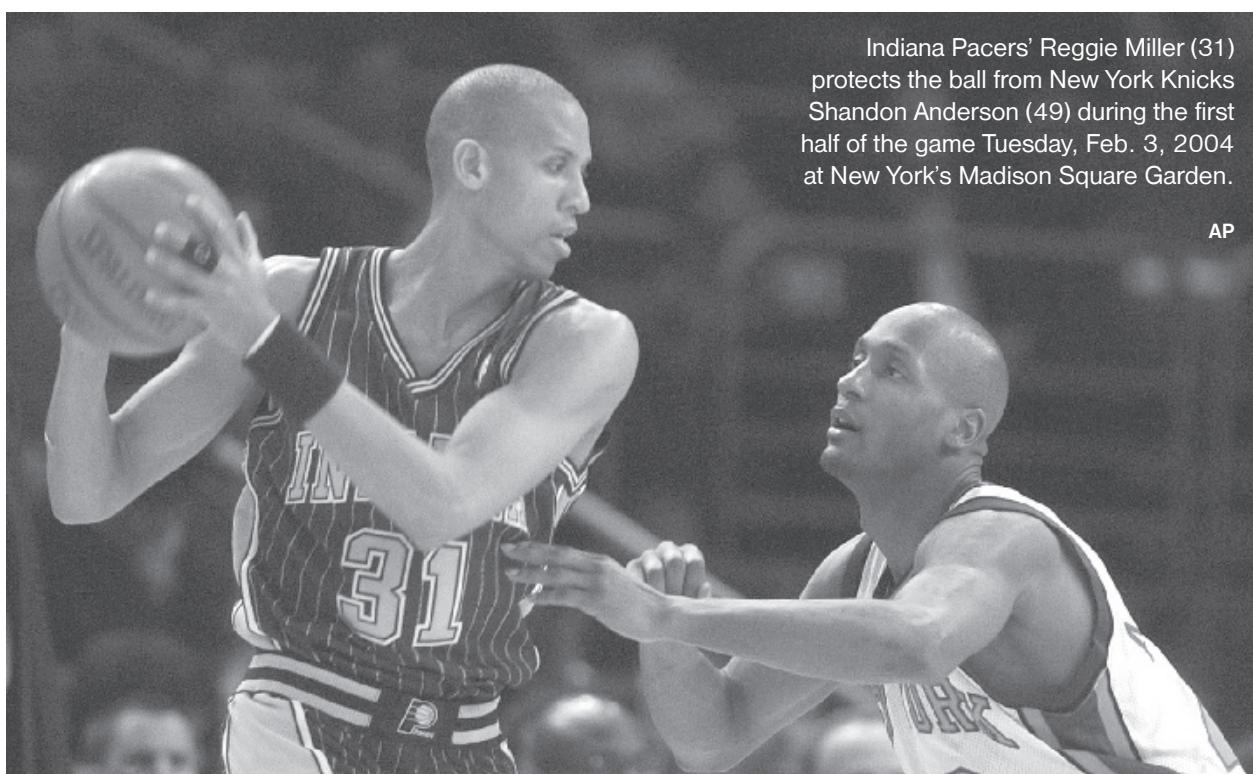
Hardaway had 14 points, including a clinching jumper with 17.2 seconds remaining, and Marbury had 23 points and eight assists. Keith Van Horn outplayed Ron Artest at small forward and had 20 points, 12 rebounds, three assists and two blocked shots, and Kurt Thomas added 19 points and 12 rebounds.

Artest had 19 points for the Pacers, who were coached by Thomas the past three seasons. Thomas was fired in August by new team president Larry Bird, and this was his former team's first time playing in his presence since it was eliminated in the first round of the playoffs last spring.

"It's not about me, it's about the players, and they played well tonight," Thomas said. "I have a tremendous amount of respect for the Pacers, they're a great team."

Cavaliers 85, Pistons 82

In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Carlos Boozer helped make up for LeBron James' poor shooting performance



lead.

Tracy McGrady scored 34 points for the Magic, 26 over the second and third quarters.

Mavericks 107, Warriors 93

In Dallas, Michael Finley scored 23 points and reserve Antawn Jamison added 20 points and 12 rebounds as Dallas beat Golden State for the 20th straight time.

Steve Nash had 17 points and eight assists for the Mavericks, who ended a two-game skid and have won 10 of 12.

Dallas' Dirk Nowitzki, named as a reserve to Western Conference All-Star team earlier, finished with nine points, 12 under his season average. Antoine Walker and Josh Howard added 15 points each for the Mavericks.

Speedy Claxton and Jason Richardson had 20 points apiece to pace the Warriors, who last beat the Mavericks on April 10, 1999.

Kings 117, SuperSonics 101

In Sacramento, California, Brad Miller scored 14 of his 25 points in the third quarter as Sacramento beat Seattle for its fourth straight win.

Peja Stojakovic had 26 points for the Kings, who improved to 22-3 this season at Arco Arena.

Rashard Lewis led Seattle with 25 points, while Ray Allen added 23 points, five rebounds and five assists after being named to the All-Star team earlier in the day for the fourth time in his career.

The 2.13-meter (7-foot) Miller, selected to his second All-Star team along with Stojakovic, finished with 15 boards, five assists, a steal and a block.

Timberwolves 113, Magic 100

In Minneapolis, Kevin Garnett had 30 points and 14 rebounds, and Sam Cassell added 20 points and 10 assists to lead Minnesota over Orlando.

Latrell Sprewell added 25 points and seven assists for the Timberwolves, who won for the 13th time in 15 games — and 13th straight at home.

The Timberwolves struggled to put the Magic away until Garnett re-entered the game with 9 minutes to go and his team up 87-82.

Garnett then scored eight points during Minnesota's 10-2 run. Cassell hit a 3-pointer and later converted a three-point play to give the Wolves a 105-88

Xavier upends No. 10 Cincinnati, 71-69

By JOE KAY
AP SPORTS WRITER

CINCINNATI (AP) — Lionel Chalmers scored 20 points, including a fadeaway jumper with 27 seconds left Tuesday night, leading Xavier to a 71-69 victory over No. 10 Cincinnati.

The Musketeers (11-9) pulled off another stunning upset of their crosstown rival by getting big games from their two senior guards.

Chalmers repeatedly drove to the basket and made floating jumpers over the outstretched arms of the Bearcats' brawny front line. Romain Sato added 18 points and went 9-of-10 from the free throw line.

Cincinnati (15-3) has lost six of its last eight games against Xavier, which usually plays its best against its closest rival. That eight-year stretch includes two upsets when Cincinnati was ranked No. 1.

Chalmers made a 3-pointer that tied it for the third and final time in the second half. Two minutes later, he stepped back from a double-team and made an 18-foot jumper for a 70-69 lead with 27 seconds left.

Cincinnati then threw away a chance for the last shot. Nick Williams' cross-court pass for Armein Kirkland flew

Knight rapped for spat with chancellor

By BETSY BLANEY
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LUBBOCK, Texas (AP) — Bob Knight was reprimanded, but not suspended, on Tuesday for his loud public outburst at Texas Tech chancellor David Smith.

After coaching his No. 19 Red Raiders over Baylor 83-63, Knight said there had been discussions about a suspension. The coach also admitted he could've avoided the episode by simply walking away from Smith.

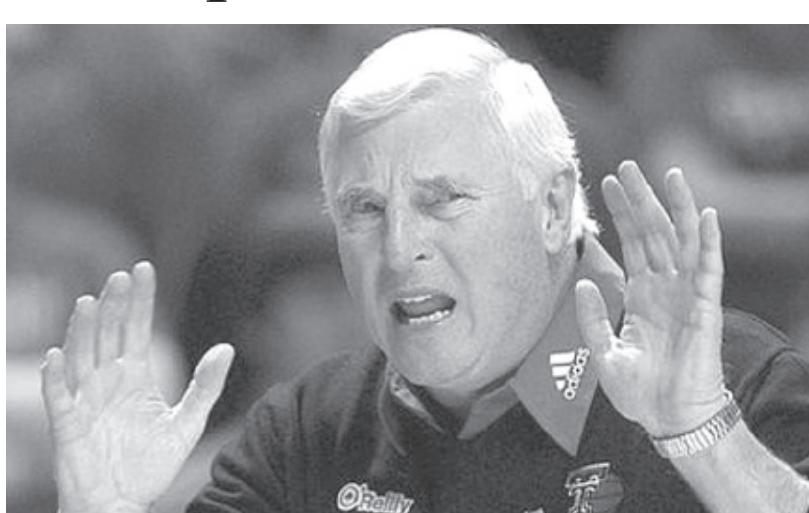
"I regret that the situation turned out the way it did," Knight said earlier in a four-paragraph news release. "I look forward to finishing this season in a strong fashion and I am glad the situation is behind me so that I can return to the business of coaching."

Tech athletic director Gerald Myers said in a statement that "appropriate personnel action" was taken regarding Monday's verbal spat at an upscale grocery store.

As Knight left the court after Tuesday night's home win, the crowd cheered loudly and he acknowledged the fans by raising his right hand in appreciation.

After the game, Knight said he talked with his wife Monday night about how he would've handled a suspension.

Knight said he would have gone "through whatever means were available to fight that, but I would have



Texas Tech coach Bob Knight yells in the first half of the game against Baylor in Lubbock, Texas, Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2004.

stayed through the suspension simply because I feel so strongly about this situation, this school, this community and these kids and that would not have been easy for me to do, but I would have done it with them."

In his version of the spat, Knight said Smith followed him to the side of the salad bar and said, "You've got issues. What are they?"

"Right then is where I think I was at fault," Knight said. "I should have shook my head, walked away, done a lot of other things, and I didn't. I went on to tell him what one of those issues was and then it got back and forth a little bit."

"But the one thing there was, that I absolutely did not instigate anything."

Before the game, Knight received a rousing ovation when he came onto the court a couple of minutes earlier than usual. Even a Baylor assistant, standing under the basket during warmups, applauded as Knight walked out and shook hands with the coach.

A row of students near the Tech bench wore red T-shirts with white lettering that read, "Lettuce Support Coach Knight"—a reference to rumors that lettuce had been thrown during the spat.

over his head with 4.9 seconds left, Cincinnati's 18th turnover.

Chalmers was fouled and missed two free throws, but Eric Hicks knocked the ball out of bounds as he tussled with Sato for the rebound, keeping the ball in Xavier's hands. The buzzer went off as players for both teams scrambled for a loose inbounds pass.

Tony Bobbitt scored 17 points for Cincinnati, which has lost three of its last five games after a 13-0 start.

Xavier's struggles this season — five losses in its previous six games — took some of the luster but none of the emotion out of the annual rivalry.

Cincinnati coach Bob Huggins stirred it up the last few days by saying Xavier's fans were the most profane he'd ever encountered. Xavier officials apologized for the student section's conduct after that game, but were miffed when Huggins brought it up again this week.

The two school presidents sat together on the Xavier bench during warmups, chatting and sharing a few laughs. The Rev. Michael Graham of Xavier then walked to midcourt and asked the crowd of 10,250 to applaud new Cincinnati president Nancy Zimpher.

The crowd went silent as the home team fumbled around in the opening minutes.

Boston fêtes Super Bowl champion Patriots

By JAY LINDSAY
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

BOSTON (AP)—The New England Patriots held high their second Super Bowl trophy in three seasons before a raucous downtown crowd Tuesday, celebrating a championship that was as thrilling as the first one.

"We're baaack!" Brady told a shoulder-to-shoulder crowd in City Hall Plaza, standing with team owner Robert Kraft, coach Bill Belichick and dozens of teammates amid a hail of red, white and blue confetti.

Brady and Kraft hoisted the twin Super Bowl trophies as they led a parade to City Hall before hundreds of thousands of fans.

Kraft and Belichick praised the players' "no-stars" work ethic that led to a season-ending streak of 15 straight wins and Sunday's 32-29 victory over the Carolina Panthers.

"For a team to accomplish their goals, everybody's got to give up a little of their individuality, and that's what these players did, and that's why they're champions," Belichick said.

In a repeat of the 2002 Super Bowl celebration, Kraft, Brady and Belichick did a victory dance for the crowd, egged on by All-Pro cornerback Ty Law.

No starting quarterback has ever won two Super Bowls faster than the 26-year-old Brady, who said he's looking for more.

"One was nice, two's a lot nicer, but I need number three," said Brady, a two-time Super Bowl MVP.

Fans weren't shy about predicting more success Tuesday.



New England Patriot fans fill Boston City Hall Plaza, Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2004 as they celebrate the Super Bowl champions during a victory parade and rally in downtown Boston.

Chris Cashen, a painter from Rockland, said he's already asked his boss for time off for next year's celebration.

"This team was a joke for so long," he said. "(Now) we're frustrating the rest of the league. I think we'll see another parade next year. That's my plan."

Jason Scheinbart of Burlington, Vt., said the Patriots proved their last Super Bowl victory wasn't a fluke.

"Now every team in the world that wants to win the Super Bowl has to go through Foxboro, Massachusetts," he said.

Boston police estimated a total crowd of 1.5 million. Police made seven arrests, most for disorderly conduct. Eighty-seven people were injured but none seriously, Boston EMS Chief Richard Serino said.

The party started early for thousands of revelers, who began streaming into City Hall Plaza before dawn, some wearing face paint, wigs and Revolutionary-era militia outfits. By midday, the plaza was jammed. Some young women bared their breasts or kissed each other to the cheers of the crowd; plastic bottles were thrown; and some scuffles broke out. But the crowd settled down and cheered as images from the parade were broadcast on huge screens.

Patriots players waved and videotaped the crowd as they traveled the 1 1/2-mile parade route from Copley Plaza to City Hall in "Duck Boats," Boston's famous amphibious tourist vehicles.

Spectators were stacked 10 deep along both sides of Tremont Street by Boston Common. Some

fans stood on mailboxes and others leaned out of office windows, holding signs and screaming.

The rally even drew Carolina fan Craig Whitney of Hampton, N.H. He wore his Panthers cap proudly.

"Even though we lost, it was still the greatest football game I've ever seen," he said.

High school students Sheila Gill and Dena Norton of Medfield waited for a glimpse of Brady and receiver Troy Brown.

"We skipped school," Norton said. "But we'll do anything to support the Patriots."

Jenny Callahan, a Wentworth Institute of Technology student from Florida, came with about 10 friends. She had "Go Pats" written in blue on one side of her face, with Brady's No. 12 on the other.

Marino changes mind, resigns as Dolphins' senior VP

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP SPORTS WRITER

MIAMI (AP)—Dan Marino's visit was a surprise to Wayne Huizenga. The purpose of it was even more stunning.

Five weeks removed from asking for an executive position with the Miami Dolphins and only three weeks after accepting the senior vice president job created solely for him, Marino resigned Tuesday and left the team he quarterbacked for 17 seasons.

As recently as Sunday, Marino denied reports saying he was having second thoughts about assuming control of the Dolphins' football operations. But at 2:45 p.m. Tuesday, he made an unannounced visit to Huizenga's office and quit, spurning attempts the owner made to change his mind.

"I heard about it on the television a couple of days ago, but I didn't believe it," Huizenga said. "Needless to say, we're disappointed. Dan is a great guy and we like him a lot. He would have been good for this organization."

A telephone message left at Ma-



Former Miami Dolphins quarterback Dan Marino talks to members of the media during a news conference in this Jan. 12, 2004 file photo, in Davie, Fla.

riño's home was not returned. A woman who answered the phone and refused to give her name said he could not be reached, and it was believed Marino was travel-

ing to New York to tape a Super Bowl wrapup show for HBO's "Inside the NFL."

"I have decided that it would not be in the best interests of ei-

ther my family or the Dolphins to assume the role as the team's senior vice president of football operations," Marino said in a statement released by the team.

Marino played for the Dolphins from 1983-99 and took them to the 1985 Super Bowl, which they lost to San Francisco. He holds NFL records with 61,361 yards passing and 420 touchdown passes.

He planned to leave his analyst jobs at CBS Sports and HBO to come back to the Dolphins, beginning a full-time role next week. Marino had been part of at least one team personnel meeting and was at the Senior Bowl in Mobile, Ala., for one day, but never took control of the football operations.

Don Strock, Marino's close friend and former backup at quarterback, said the timing of rejoining the Dolphins might have been wrong for Marino.

"He's his own man," Strock said. "I'm sure his family became involved, and they decided what was best for them. He has to do what is right. But I know one day — I don't know when — he's going to be back in football."

Tribune Sports Scores

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New Jersey	26	20	.565	—
New York	23	27	.460	5
Boston	22	27	.449	5 1-2
Miami	21	28	.429	6 1-2
Philadelphia	20	29	.408	7 1-2
Washington	14	32	.304	12
Orlando	13	37	.260	15

Central Division

Indiana	36	14	.720	—
Detroit	33	17	.660	3
Milwaukee	26	21	.553	8 1-2
New Orleans	26	22	.542	9
Toronto	22	24	.478	12
Cleveland	19	29	.396	16
Atlanta	15	34	.306	20 1-2
Chicago	13	36	.265	22 1-2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

Minnesota	34	13	.723	—
San Antonio	32	18	.640	3 1-2
Dallas	30	18	.625	4 1-2
Denver	29	21	.580	6 1-2
Houston	26	21	.553	8
Memphis	26	21	.553	8
Utah	24	24	.500	10 1-2

Pacific Division

Sacramento	34	12	.739	—
L.A. Lakers	28	17	.622	5 1-2
Seattle	23	24	.489	11 1-2
L.A. Clippers	21	25	.457	13
Portland	21	25	.457	13
Golden State	20	27	.426	14 1-2
Phoenix	18	32	.360	18

MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

EAST

C.W. Post 70, Mercy, N.Y. 56
Clark U. 85, Worcester Tech 56
Colby-Sawyer 105, Wentworth Tech 74
Concordia, N.Y. 82, Dowling 76
E. Connecticut 78, Curry 68
Emerson 70, Emmanuel 64
Endicott 73, New England 60
Fredonia St. 62, Buffalo St. 61
Gordon 80, New England Coll. 62
Massachusetts 74, Rider 61
Oswego St. 85, New Paltz 54
Potsdam 67, St. Lawrence 58
Rhode Island Coll. 68, Salve Regina 64
St. Peter's 68, Siena 59
Stevens Tech 69, Centenary, N.J. 62
Tufts 96, Keene St. 94
Union, N.Y. 78, Skidmore 74
Utica 87, Keuka 61
Utica Tech 68, Cortland St. 64
Vassar 67, Bard 50
Westfield St. 84, Albertus Magnus 64
Worcester St. 61, Fitchburg St. 58

SOUTH

Albany, Ga. 105, LeMoyne-Owen 54
Benedict College 89, Paine 78
Brescia 62, Cumberland, Tenn. 60
Circleville Coll. 119, Kentucky Christian 106
Davidson 67, The Citadel 49
East Carolina 59, South Florida 57
Fayetteville St. 100, N.C. Central 87
Florida Gulf Coast 82, Ala.-Huntsville 71
Florida St. 81, Georgia Tech 65
Fort Valley St. 75, Miles 56
Huntingdon 73, Pensacola Christian 67
Kentucky 68, Florida 65
King, Tenn. 75, Montreal 65
Morehead St. 74, E. Kentucky 67
Pfeiffer 106, Queens, N.C. 102
Tenn. Wesleyan 73, Milligan 68
Tuskegee 77, Kentucky St. 74
Virginia St. 76, Johnson C. Smith 72

MIDWEST

Bellevue 73, Park 66
Concordia, Wis. 89, Marian, Wis. 85
DePaul 72, Tulane 58
Edgewood 78, Wis. Lutheran 54
Evangel 64, Coll. of the Ozarks 59
Grace 78, St. Francis, Ind. 74
Huntington 77, Goshen 59
Illinois 51, Indiana 49
Lawrence 85, St. Norbert 50
Malone 86, Urbana 69
Maranatha Baptist 61, Milwaukee Engineering 60
Northern St., S.D. 78, Minn.-Crookston 75, OT
S. Illinois 59, SW Missouri St. 52
South Dakota 83, Hastings 51
St. Francis, Ill. 69, Olivet Nazarene 67
TCU 85, Marquette 79
Taylor 69, Marian, Ind. 59
Wis.-La Crosse 67, Wis.-Eau Claire 66
Wis.-Platteville 63, Wis.-Oshkosh 55

SPORTS BRIEFS

MBL 40+ meeting this Saturday

The Masters Basketball League 40-and-over tournament will hold an important meeting this Saturday, February 7, 1pm at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Pick up games are also scheduled right after the meeting and all interested participants are invited to come and join. MBL is gearing up to kick off the league by the third week of the current month.

For more inquiries, please contact BANMI president Elias Rangamar at 664-2500, Tony Rogolifo at 664-2508 or BANMI public information officer Abner Venus at 287-5911. (*Mark Rabago*)

Bud Cup starts Feb. 10

The Budweiser Cup or Men's Island-wide Basketball League will begin this coming Monday, February 9, at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

A total of seven teams have signed up to participate in the tournament. The team that emerges as championship gets \$1,000 cash, while second and third place will take home \$300 and \$200, respectively. The Budweiser Cup will also hold side events like a half court shootout and a three-point contest.

For more information on the Budweiser Cup, please contact BANMI PIO Abner Venus at 287-5911 or BANMI president Elias Rangamar at 664-2500. (*Mark Rabago*)

Saipan Softball Association to hold two leagues this month

The Saipan Softball Association will begin the Men's 35-and-Up Slow Pitch Softball League and the Men's Slow Pitch Softball Business League this February 16 at the Susupe Softball Field..

All interested players, managers, coaches, and teams are encouraged to begin preparations for the two leagues, which both require an \$800 entrance fee from each team.

An organizational meeting for both leagues will be held this Tuesday, February 10, at 5:30 pm at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium conference room at which time entrance fees, team rosters, and other fees will be due.

For more information regarding the above matters, contact association president Robert A. Guerrero at 888-0215, league coordinator Liz Palacios at 235-9890, or association treasurer Peding Tenorio at 322-9982/3. (*Shan Seman*)

Boxers wanted for international bouts

Philmar Pacific International Promotions, LTD. will promote international bouts this February 28 at the Garapan Central Park.

Dubbed the Thrilla on Saipan, the event will not only feature fighters from the CNMI, but also topnotch contenders from Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines.

Amateur boxing will serve as preliminary fights leading up to the main event. The event is scheduled to get underway at 6pm and will last until all fights have concluded.

For more information or to register, please contact Al Taitano at 234-1734 (home), 234-8607/09 (work), or 483-2969 (cell).

TAGA

From Page 28

of Kazumi Imai and Yuko Kobayashi reigned supreme in the women's open. Second place went to Letty Jones and Delia Johnson.

Mixed doubles winners were second place Phil Kalen and Vivian Lee in the 3.0, 4.0 winners Ralph Buenaventura and Joy Minor, open champions Imai and Dunlop and the second place team of Sally Wong and Felipe Quiroz.

IVYBL

From Page 28

announced at the later part of last year that the IVYBL will be organizing only one tournament beginning in 2004.

For the past years, organizers have always held the IVYBL twice a year, with the first season taking place during the summer and the shorter second season beginning in December.

Mettao said the two-season

singles winners include Ellemen Solomon, Dr. Richard Brostrom, Nanding Cajigan, Felipe Quiroz, Mayuko Arriola, and Letty Jones. The runners-up in the singles were Naruse, Toz Beltau, Gerald Narciso, Eli Buenaventura, Flor Jones, Kani Ashraf, and Delia Johnson.

Pangelinan said despite the shipping snafus involving the delivery of the trophies, the Taga Tennis Tournament still was a successful event. He also thanked Pacific Trading Co. and Miller Lite for sponsoring the tournament.

format per year was shelved because of the proliferation of other youth leagues for baseball and basketball on Saipan.

The IVYBL charges an entrance fee of \$100 and teams are required to submit documents verifying the ages of players.

In the last IVYBL, the sweet shooting of guard L.J. Reyes and inside of presence forward Jesse Garcia led the Chalan Kanoa Saints to a 68-65 victory over the Garapan Rollers I in the finals.

Mobil sure of Tuesday start for invitational

By MARK RABAGO
REPORTER

Mobil Save for a few knocks on the new scoreboard, the 2004 season of the Mobil Oil Marianas Invitational Co-ed Basketball Tournament is about ready for its February 10 start.

According to Basketball Association of the Northern Mariana Islands public information officer Abner Venus, the opening will be held at exactly 6pm at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

He is requesting all participating teams to come on time, as the tournament will be holding its customary parade of teams.

Defending champion Pacific Development Inc. leads this year's 10-team strong tournament, which is the only league on Saipan to require participating squads to field women players in games.

Aside from PDI, other teams coming back for the new season are Microl-Toyota, 2001 champion Tan Holding Corp., Aqua Resort Club, Dai-Ichi Saipan Beach Hotel, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Commonwealth Utilities Corp., Commonwealth Ports Authority, Pacific Islands Aviation, and host Mobil.

Of the 10 teams mentioned, Aqua Resort has made the biggest moves in the off-season, signing up 6'3" center Delvin Cortez and 6'0" playmaker Marco Garcia. Also expected to suit up for the hotel is former Tan Holdings swingman Bogs Dayrit.

The three will join a core that is already made up of point guard Rodel Alcantara and center Cris Bojocan.

Also expected to be a dark horse this year is PIA. Despite the loss of playmaker Rick Alegre, the team has retained bona fide all-stars Robert "On-yok" Tamondong, Gary Rapanut, and Rod De Lara.

Another threat is 2002 Champion Toyota. The Microl team is made up of 2002 MVP Jorge De Guzman, and holdovers Rodney



SHAN SEMAN

Hyatt Regency Saipan spitfire Bing Marasigan goes up for a tough shot against Pacific Development Inc. in a file photo from the 2003 season.

Catalla, Lawrence Pantola, James Abuy and John Capuyon.

CUC, meanwhile, scored a coup of sorts when it lured jumping jack Jawn Joyner away from CPA to play center for the team.

Joyner will team with CUC resident scorer Derrick Reyes, and guards George Poquiz and Joe "Kamikaze" Camacho.

Dai-Ichi, meanwhile, will continue to rely on the Mutt-and-Jeff combination of forward Tom Alegre and playmaker Adonis Macoto. Other key players for the hoteliers are Jeruel Zamora, Jhun Alipala and center Roland Galag. Hyatt

hopes to get the most of Bing Marasigan and Cris Calub.

Tan Holdings is fielding a team composed of 6'4" tower Colin Thompson, sweet-shooting forward Jun Tabora, and guard Ariel Jinang, while CPA will have to rely on big guns Charlie Sablan and Mel Tagabuel.

Last year, PDI leaned on scoring machine Shiro Kashiwagi's 59-point explosion to turn back a Beverly Igital-led Mobil team in the finals, 104-101. Others who made up the champion team were playoff MVP Manny Guimalan, forward Edwin Catilo, and underrated center Joel Guinto.

off spot in the East.

He is 13th in the NBA in scoring and 12th in assists, averaging 24.1 points since Cleveland traded Ricky Davis to Boston in mid-December. James, Pierce, Allen and McGrady are the only players averaging at least 20 points, five rebounds and five assists.

Coaches had to choose a center, two forwards, two guards and two others regardless of position. They could not vote for their own players.

"I can't understand the reason he didn't make it," Cleveland coach Paul Silas said. "Maybe it was because of our record. But he certainly put up the numbers comparable to any guard that got picked."

"I feel that everything happens for a reason and that this will turn out for the best. He's going to make a lot of All-Star games before he's done, and this will

Mobil, who also had shooting ace Andres "Jun" Estolas and Junar Guiab in its line-up settled for runner-up honors, while then newcomer PIA took third place.

Contrary to earlier reports, Igital will continue to don the Mobil jersey in the fourth season of the co-ed league. Igital is fresh from taking home a mythical five selection in last year's Micronesian Basketball League in Palau.

For more information about the upcoming Mobil cage league, please contact Mobil's Jojo Dadiwas at 483-3363 or Venus at 287-5991.

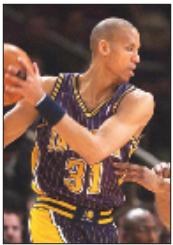
keep him humble," Silas said.

There will be six All-Stars with international roots - Kirilenko (Russia), Stojakovic (Serbia and Montenegro), Magloire (Canada) Nowitzki (Germany), Yao (China) and Duncan (U.S. Virgin Islands) – which ties the record set a year ago.

James will play alongside Carmelo Anthony of Denver in the Rookie Challenge on Friday night against a team of second-year players that includes Yao.

NBA commissioner David Stern will select a replacement if any of the All-Stars withdraws because of injury, but James is not interested.

"I wasn't part of the ones that they picked at first, so I wouldn't even like to be a part of the team if somebody didn't go," James said. "I'm an only child and I never want to be picked second. I don't come second."



Round 1 to Thomas as Knicks beat Pacers

Two of Isiah Thomas' acquisitions, Penny Hardaway and Stephon Marbury, made several big plays down the stretch Tuesday to lead the New York Knicks past the Pacers 97-90, ending Indiana's three-game winning streak.

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Saipan Tribune

Sports

Mobil sure of Tuesday start for invitational

Save for a few knocks on the new scoreboard, the 2004 season of the Mobil Oil Marianas Invitational Co-ed Basketball Tournament is about ready for its February 10 start.

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Taga winners finally get trophies

By MARK RABAGO
REPORTER

The Saipan Tennis Association finally handed out championship and runner-up trophies the association was unable to give out last December in an impromptu barbecue and get-together last Saturday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

STA president Roy Pangelinan said that shipping problems resulted in the trophies meant for its 1st Annual Taga Tennis Tournament being delivered somewhere in India; that caused the close to two-month delay in the arrival of the hardware on Saipan.

It could be recalled that Pangelinan, STA adviser Dr. Bert Ventura, and vice president Nelia Luna were stuck with only a handful of trophies during the tournament's awards banquet last December 20 and this forced them to instead hand "promissory" certificates to the winners.

"It all turned out well in the end. I would like to thank the membership of STA and especially the winners and second place players for their patience," said Pangelinan.

Ligaya Paculanang, who won a total of four trophies in the December tournament, said she was just happy that STA members finally got to see each other again.

"The trophies are really secondary. I'm just glad that the camaraderie



MARK RABAGO

Champion and runner-up players of the Saipan Tennis Association's 1st Annual Taga Tennis Tournament line up for a snapshot during a "second" awards ceremony last Saturday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

within the group is still alive and this "second" awarding is a great excuse for us to get together again," she said.

The cook from Country House paired with Mina Solomon to win the

women's 3.0 doubles and collaborated with Archie Monticillo to take home the mixed doubles 3.0. She also took runner-up honors in the women's 4.0 and mixed doubles 4.0 with Cleofe

Santos and Buddy Garote serving as her partners.

Arlene Osma, for her part, jokingly admitted that she was a bit envious of the trophies, because unlike her, they

Shaq in, LeBron out of NBA All-Star game

By CHRIS SHERIDAN
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

1 NEW YORK (AP)—LeBron James didn't make the cut.

James was not among the 14 reserves announced Tuesday for the All-Star game, the talented rookie getting outpolled in voting by Eastern Conference coaches who instead selected guards Paul Pierce, Michael Redd, Baron Davis and Jason Kidd.

"Not making it just tells me I've got to work harder," said James, one of only four players leaguewide averaging at least 20 points, five rebounds and five assists. "I've been earning a lot of things this year—earning the respect of players, the respect of refs. That's another thing I've got to earn, to be a part of the elite group."

Shaquille O'Neal of the Los Angeles Lakers was among the Western Conference reserves for the league's showcase event Feb. 15 in Los Angeles.

Other West reserves are Dirk Nowitzki of Dallas, Peja Stojakovic and Brad

Miller of Sacramento, Sam Cassell of Minnesota, Andrei Kirilenko of Utah and Ray Allen of Seattle.

The other East reserves are Jamaal Magloire of New Orleans, Ron Artest of Indiana and Kenyon Martin of New Jersey.

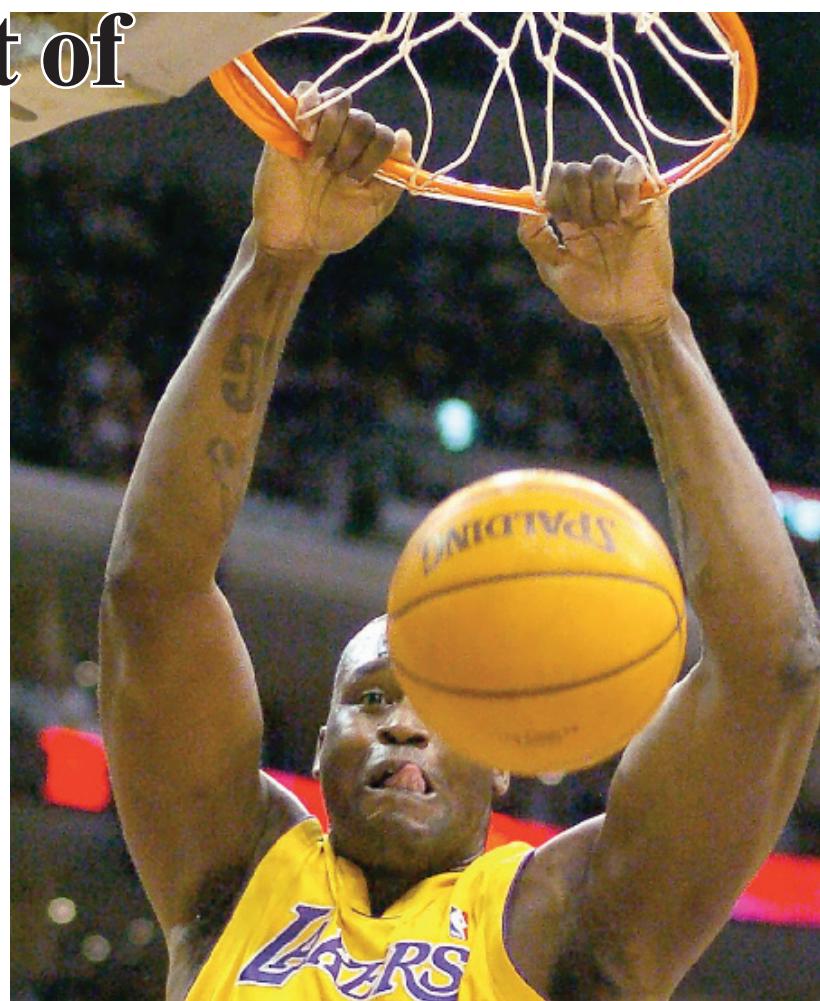
"Not a bad thing to be on your resume, All-Star in front of your name," said Martin, one of six players who will make their first All-Star appearance.

Other players having strong seasons who did not make the All-Stars include Mike Bibby of Sacramento, Latrell Sprewell of Minnesota, Chauncey Billups and Richard Hamilton of Detroit, Michael Finley of Dallas and Zach Randolph of Portland.

The selection of Allen was one of the most surprising after he missed the first 25 games of the season following ankle surgery.

"I would rather be in L.A. than any place in the country," said Allen, who had planned a getaway to Las Vegas with teammate Antonio Daniels. "It's a bragging right... I totally thought I had

See SHAQ on Page 27



Los Angeles Lakers' Shaquille O'Neal dunks for a basket during the first half against the Seattle SuperSonics, Wednesday night, Jan. 28, 2004, in Los Angeles.

were able to "visit" India.

Osma won runner-up trophies and a 3.0 singles championship. She teamed up with Agnes Salazar for a runner-up finish in the women's doubles 3.0 and then did the same playing with Nelia Luna in the 4.0.

"Everyone seems to be taking the delay in a good light," said Luna. "It really shows how tight knit and understanding this group of people really are."

Ventura, meanwhile, said that he agreed with Paculanang when she said that another awards ceremony for the Taga Tournament was indeed not that bad, and actually gives members an opportunity to catch up with one another.

"I haven't seen some of these guys since December. It's nice to know that everyone seems to be OK and doing great this year," he said.

Other winners of the Taga Tennis Tournament were John Wayne and Hiob Naruse in the men's doubles 3.0 and the second place team of Hector Benitez and Emil Gara. Elmer Guzman and Ronnie Lacbayo in the men's doubles 4.0 and the second place team of Edwin Maratas and George Olanda. Eli Buenaventura and Alex Martin in the men's 40-and-over division and the second place team of Don Dunlop and Jack McClure. Roy Pangelinan and Felipe Quiroz in the men's open and the second place team of Ed Johnson and Lito Cabrera.

Over in the women's side, the pair

See TAGA on Page 27

IVYBL set to begin in March

By MARK RABAGO
REPORTER

The 7th season of the Island-wide Village Youth Basketball League is expected to begin in early or mid March and the Division of Sports and Recreation is urging participating teams to prepare.

League coordinator Joe Mettao also said that the IVYBL will be having an organizational meeting on February 25 to decide the kickoff date for the 14-and-under basketball tournament.

The organizational meeting is set at 5:30pm at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium conference room. For more information on the upcoming IVYBL please call Mettao or Joe Lizama at 664-2500/08 during business hours.

It could be recalled that Mettao

See IVYBL on Page 27

